







# **MAKERS OF NEW CHINA**

**BY  
S. S. BATLIWALA**



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**TO THE MEMORY OF**  
**Dr. Dwarakanath Shantaram Kotnis**

*A great Indian patriot who died on 9th December 1942 in Ko-Kung, Western Hopeh, when carrying out the task with which his country had entrusted him—aiding the heroic Chinese people in their struggle for liberation.*

*"Dr. Kotnis' memory belongs not only to our two great nations but also to the noble ranks of the indomitable fighters for the freedom and progress of all mankind. The future will honour him even more than the present just because it was for the future he fought and died." —Madame Sun Yat-sen.*

**Author.**



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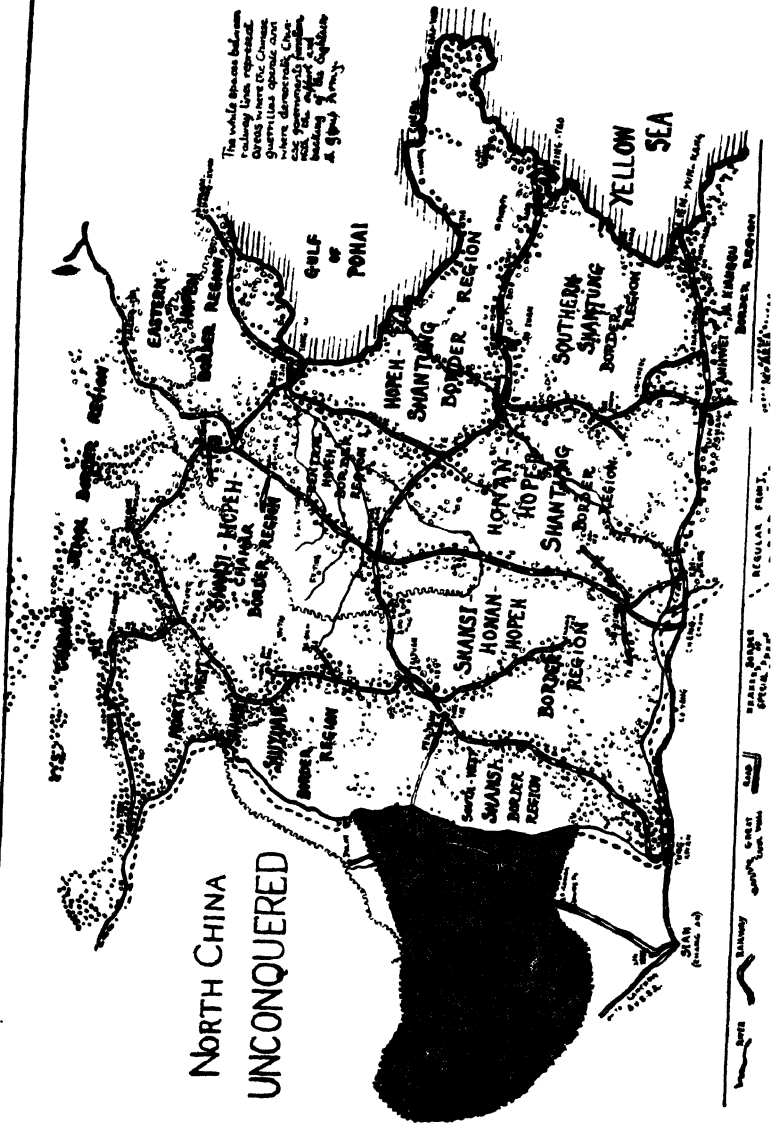
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# NORTH CHINA UNCONQUERED



The whole Chinese before  
the war was represented  
by the Japanese  
Guerrillas and the  
where democratic China  
was represented by the  
building of the Japanese  
a great army.

## INTRODUCTION

Of books on China's war for freedom there is no dearth. Most of them however give only one aspect of it, the aspect presented by official leaders of the Chungking Government. This book tells us of the Communists of China, of the people they work amongst, of the fight they wage.

For six years with her bare hands China has held back the mechanised hordes of Japan. For six years, again and again apparently from the very verge of disaster, she has beaten back her enemy. For six years she has stood between the Jap war lords and their dream—the conquest of the entire East. It is only recently, only after the lightning victories scored by Japan over the armies of Britain and America, that the full magnitude of China's achievement, the full significance of her resistance, is being realised by the outside world.

Among the forces that have made this miracle possible, among the forces that have transformed the 'Sick Man of Asia'—weak and disunited, an easy prey to imperialist bandits—into what China is today, the leader of Asia's fight for freedom and equality, the Communist Party of China stands in the forefront. At a time when all seemed dark, when the arrogant invader was dismembering her with impunity and the people were steeped in torpor, apathy and despair, it was the Communists who held aloft the banner of national resistance.

And round that banner gathered the finest elements of the Chinese people, men and women with courage, vision and faith.

For years the world was allowed to hear little about them. A thick veil was cast over the areas held by them, over their activities. There were no Communists in China, there were only bandits and criminals! It was Edgar Snow who first lifted the veil and gave the world a glimpse of the Communists of China, of what they stood for, what they fought for. From him the outside world learned that the Communists were the best patriots of China, that they lived and died for one purpose alone—the creation of a free, united and happy China.

Based on reports of eye-witnesses, this book carries the story forward and tells about the Communists of China since the achievement of national united front and the outbreak of war against Japan. It tells why the Eighth Route Army, led by Communists, is invincible. It tells how the Army forges unity with the people and becomes one with them. It tells how with the barest of equipment and with practically no funds the Army has inflicted terrific casualties on the Japanese bandits and has pinned down their crack divisions. It tells how it fights against ignorance and apathy and rouses the whole people of the areas where it operates. It tells of women who brave all, dedicate themselves body and soul to the sacred cause of national freedom, and fight shoulder to shoulder with their brothers and husbands. It tells how the Communists are striving to solve the problem of Muslim nationalities, a problem which strikingly resembles our own.

Above all it tells how, despite the gravest provocation—slander, neglect and even mass murder of their brothers—the Communists have maintained the United Front. Theirs has not been a path strewn with roses, even after the formal realisation of the United Front in 1937. But they have permitted nothing—literally nothing—to make them swerve from the path which alone they know leads to freedom and the regeneration of China—the path of national unity for national resistance.

“Only the people are immortal”, said Stalin. And it is by basing itself on the people, through unshakable faith in the people, that a Party of the people grows strong. The history of modern China is a history of such growth. Therein lies its significance for all epochs.

Poona,  
4-8-43

AJOY GHOSH

# PART I-WHERE RED MEETS BLUE

## CHAPTER I

### THE SOCIAL COCKPIT

In the year 1941, in the fourth year of the War, when a Japanese military spokesman was confronted by a foreign Press correspondent with the fact that Japanese wounded were pouring into Peiping, a piece of direct evidence that Chinese resistance could not possibly have collapsed as he had asserted so vehemently, he is reported to have said: "That is just it. The Chinese are unscientific. If they knew scientific warfare, they would have realised long ago that they were defeated." What he was at pains to describe as a mere shadow of resistance was the struggle of "shadows", the new men of a new China, armed with a new technique of warfare not provided for in the books of orthodox military science.

China has changed. The sick man of Asia, with his opium habits of the past, now stands rejuvenated. The music of the future is no more mumbled over a broken Chinese lute, strung by the feeble and shaky hands of a nerve-wrecked, prematurely old and decrepit man. Chinese resistance today is a bugle-call for all Asiatic youth to shake off its shackles. China no more glories in building airy castles out of the illusive shadows of outmoded philosophies. It is re-shaping its society on the firm foundation of national unity, a will to survive all odds, coupled with an intelligent appreciation of international movements shaping the modern world.

Estimating the 1911 Chinese Revolution, Lenin wrote: "What we have before us is a really great ideology of a really great people, which is able not only to bemoan its age-long slavery, not only to dream of liberty and equality, but is able also to FIGHT the age-long oppressors of China." \*

The change had already become visible as far back as 1911. The Japanese refused to see it, or insisted on belittling it when it came to their notice. Decadent Fascism had blinded them. To-day they are paying the price for their blindness. Chinese



society has been undergoing a fundamental reorientation. As a result, new China has obliterated the word 'defeat' from its dictionary.

What is the nature of modern Chinese society? What stage has China reached in the social revolution that is metamorphosing one-fifth of mankind on Chinese soil? What is the class-structure of this society, of the Chinese revolution? What kind of chain binds the different layers of the Chinese population? Who hold the chains, and who are gnawing at them, and with what success?

Mao Tse-tung, popularly named "the Lenin of China", answered these questions to Nym Wales on July 4, 1937. And he said: "The nature of Chinese society may be summarised in a single phrase: it is a semi-feudal, semi-colonial society. Different economic forms exist, but the feudal petty-commercial form is dominant, based mainly on rural economy. By petty-commercial economy I mean that stage of self-sufficient economy preceding the capitalist form and going back to the most backward stages, when goods are produced for self-consumption and not for commodity sale.

"However, China is also already in a stage of capitalist economy. To deny the existence of capitalist economy would be wrong. Capitalist economy is made up of three parts: (1) Individual Capitalists; (2) the National Government; and (3) the Imperialists. These three elements combined together form the capitalist structure of Chinese economy. This capitalist form is a new form of economy in China, and it is in conflict with Chinese feudal economy. Its power lies in the metropolitan cities, in communications, industry, mining, etc. However, capitalism is not yet in the dominant position in Chinese economy, because of imperialist oppression which creates a condition under which the native Chinese individual and National Government capitalism have no possibility of further development. In many phases of production the imperialist element is greater than the Chinese. Even in the case of the National Government enterprises, such as railways and various industries, the capital resources came also originally from imperialism. Added to this is the fact that the Chinese customs revenues are also restricted by the imperialists.

"From the above analysis it is clear that capitalist economy in China as a whole is under imperialist control. Likewise

the existence of a feudal form of economy hinders the development of capitalism in China.

"Looking at the economy of China as a whole, feudal economy is in the dominant position. Looked at from the view-point of capitalist development, colonial economy is the dominant form. This colonial economy, therefore, determines the nature of political and other relations with the imperialists and private capital, such as in the case of control of customs, etc.

"From the above, we must conclude that Chinese society is semi-feudal and semi-colonial."

Once the characteristics of Chinese society are clearly grasped, it is not difficult to diagnose the nature of the Chinese revolution.

"The Chinese Revolution is an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, bourgeois-democratic national revolution." Mao explains :

"One group does not agree with this analysis : the Trotskyites. In 1927, after the failure of the Great Revolution, they arrived at the following conclusion : that the tasks of the bourgeois revolution in China are already completed, the independence of the customs proving that the anti-feudal, anti-imperialist stage of the revolution was over. The Trotskyite theory developed further to the point of declaring that the capitalist and not the feudal form was dominant in Chinese economy. I noticed that recently in a Trotskyite magazine, they have changed their view-point on the problem of imperialism, that is, they agree that China is still under the domination of imperialism, but still affirm that the nature of Chinese economy is capitalistic. That capitalism has the leading role in China is a very queer view-point to come out with suddenly, when referring to a society which has for so long been dominated by imperialism. In accordance with their estimation of the nature of Chinese society, the Trotskyites conclude that the nature of the Chinese Revolution at present is not bourgeois but proletarian. Without any hesitation we are opposed to this view-point. We restate our position that the nature of Chinese society is semi-feudal and semi-colonial, and that therefore the Chinese Revolution is anti-imperialist and anti-feudal.

"It will require a long period of struggle by the Chinese people to achieve the overthrow of the imperialist and feudal forces. The completion of these tasks of the revolution means

no doubt, the clearing of the road for the development of capitalism. But at the same time we hold that there is a possibility for the Chinese Revolution to avoid the future of capitalism and to turn into a Socialist Revolution."

If such is the nature of the Revolution, what then are its driving forces, its dynamics?

Let us turn to Mao again.

"The main forces of the Chinese Revolution are the *proletariat*, the peasants and the petty-bourgeoisie. Under certain circumstances the national bourgeoisie have the possibility of joining this revolution; under certain other circumstances, they have the possibility of wavering. The enemies of the revolution are the imperialists and the Chinese landlords. Sometimes the national bourgeoisie are enemies of the revolution and sometimes not.

"The Chinese Revolution is led by the *proletariat*. Why, in a bourgeois revolution, is the proletariat in the leadership instead of the bourgeoisie? Why is the Chinese Revolution different from the bourgeois revolutions of past history? The reason is that China is in a state of semi-colonialism. Therefore the force of the proletariat is relatively greater than that of the bourgeoisie. This is because the imperialists control the big industrial enterprises in China, instead of our native bourgeoisie. The combined workers of these big imperialist industries, together with the workers of the National Government and privately-owned industries of China, are strong enough to take the hegemony over the weaker bourgeoisie.

"The working class in China numbers over two millions. Compared with the whole population, it is small in numbers, but compared with the bourgeoisie, it is a superior force. Under the combined pressure of the imperialists, the Chinese capitalists and the feudal forces, the Chinese proletariat has developed the strongest revolutionary character. Also the Chinese proletariat is affected by the world revolutionary forces,—that is, the development of proletarian revolution in the world as a whole. The establishment of the proletarian revolution in the U. S. S. R., especially, gave stimulus to the proletariat of China. After the May Fourth Movement in 1919, the Chinese proletariat rose to a politically conscious position and also began to play a role on the political stage of China. Beginning at the same time, the Chinese Communist Party was

also created.....The proletariat and the Communist forces together in China, though numerically very small, are the most energetic and strongest single force."

But then, what has been the role of the teeming masses of Chinese *peasantry* ?

Mao answers the query : "Fortunately the Chinese proletariat has had a very strong ally in revolution : the peasantry. The peasants include over eighty per cent of the population, and because they are under the double oppression of both the Chinese feudal elements and the imperialists, their revolutionary character is very strong. Under the combined exploitation of the imperialists and the Chinese landlords, the Chinese peasantry must bear the burden of paying from fifty per cent to a hundred per cent as usury interest rates. That is, if a peasant's land produces 100 *tan*, he must pay fifty to eighty per cent to the landlord. And if he borrows, which he must, he pays from fifty to a hundred percent to the usurer.

"The problems before the peasantry are to own the land they till and abolish the exploitation of imperialism. These problems cannot be solved by the bourgeois class. The peasant problem of China can only be solved by struggling decisively against imperialism and the feudal forces under the leadership of the proletariat. Therefore we say that the peasants are a strong determined ally of the Chinese proletariat."

And what about the *petty bourgeoisie* of China?

"The third driving force of the revolution is the city petty-bourgeoisie. This includes the broad mass of the students, the cultural intelligentsia, the small producers, the petty merchants and many free professionals. The majority of these forces can stand by the side of the anti-imperialist anti-feudal revolution."

And where is the national *bourgeoisie* in this alignment of forces?

"The national bourgeoisie occupy a special position in China. They stand in a position of being either enemies of the revolution, or part of the revolution itself. Sometimes they stand against the revolution. Sometimes they waver and stand by the side of the petty-bourgeoisie. The reason for this is that many of the capitalists have the nature of being compradors and semi-landlords. We do not include compradors

(agents for foreign business interests) in the class of the national bourgeoisie.....The landlords and the compradors are fundamentally related with imperialism, so they become two of the main enemies of the revolution.

"The nature of the present Nanking Government (1937) is an alliance of landlords, capitalists and comprador bourgeoisie. In a situation of direct occupation of China by an imperialist power, when the landlords and compradors face a direct menace to their own interests by such a power, we have the possibility that the anti-imperialist struggle will not be opposed by them,—except of course by those whose interests are either not affected by this aggressor or whose interests are united with that particular aggressor.

"It will now be clear why our anti-imperialist national united front is actually national—that is, why it includes all Chinese except traitors. This is the special characteristic of our national front as compared with a people's front.

"The second characteristic of our united front is that it is initiated by the political party of the proletariat, and in its later development, it is only under the leadership of this proletarian party that its organisation can be completed and its tasks accomplished. This is because the proletariat is the only conscious and decisive revolutionary force in China. The bourgeoisie cannot take up responsibility for this task.

"Because of the nature of the political and economic conditions of China, there exists this possibility that after the anti-imperialist anti-feudal bourgeois-democratic national revolution succeeds in a certain degree, the democratic revolution will conclude its victory by transforming itself into a socialist revolution. We Communists believe that such a possibility exists. The first stage of the revolution is the bourgeois-democratic revolution of the proletariat, the peasantry and the petty-bourgeoisie. During its transformation it will pass through the democratic dictatorship of the peasants and workers." \*

What Mao said in 1937 is still basically true today.

The Chinese toiler, whether in the factory or on the land, does not indulge in sables for a convenient conscience by swearing at the treacheries and misdeeds of yesterday. He has his eyes fixed on the coming to-morrow. It is true that the struggle to maintain intact the united front is hard, and a lot of groping

in the dark becomes inevitable. But already the drums in the villages are sounding because a new dawn illumines the horizon

What have the Chinese Communists contributed to this future? Are the Communists riding on the locomotive of history with their hand on the accelerating lever, or are they being carried along with the general momentum? The main purpose of this booklet is to investigate this.

## CHAPTER II

### THE REMARRIAGE

The Chinese press picturesquely described the united front achieved by the Kung Ch'antang, the Communist Party, and the Kuomintang, in the year 1937, as 'remarriage.' For ten long years the 'partners' had been parted. A most bitter civil war had raged. Now that was all a matter of the past. A new chapter was to begin. A definite goal had been demarcated, a common political objective had been chalked out. It is true that the anxiety for the 'remarriage' had been mostly one-sided, nor was it immediately sanctified by formal house-warming ceremonies on a legal constitutional basis. The People's Council was not to be elected, nor seats apportioned on the basis of half and half or one-fourth and three-fourths. In fact no legislative acknowledgement of the relationship can be found. The arrangement was euphemistically termed 'essentially Chinese.' But nevertheless, terms were accepted in cold blood on both sides. No more would the Kuomintang lead its expeditions against the Communists; no more would the Communist Party be hounded as illegal. The North-west, where the Communists had established themselves, was to be termed a 'special district' with practical autonomy in internal administrative matters. On the other hand the Soviets would cease to be called Soviets, the Red Army would become the Eighth Route Army, a part of the National Army with Chiang Kai-shek as supreme Generalissimo. And all this with the specific object of building a solid wall of united national defence against the common foe, Japan. All the three principles of San Min Chu I were to be implemented in practice: Nationalism, Democracy and People's Livelihood. Obstacles, temporary setbacks, compromises, there would be, but the basic scheme must not be jettisoned on any account. The unity of the Chinese nation was to be maintained, unity to fight the invader, unity to adopt a democratic form of government, unity to raise the down-trodden toiling masses of teeming China as a whole.

Wang Ming explained the reasons that prompted the Communists: "In agreeing to transform the Red Army

into a National Revolutionary Army, and the Soviets into widely democratic organs of government, in agreeing to give up the confiscation of the landowners' estates, etc., the Communist Party of China took as its starting point the estimate of the actual situation which had come about in China—that is, the fact of the growing activity of Japanese militarism and its agents in China, and the real danger of the Chinese people becoming subjected to complete colonial enslavement.” \*

“Only with internal unity can we successfully repulse the onslaught of Japanese imperialism”, began the manifesto issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

Chiang Kai-shek issued a rejoinder.

To quote I. Epstein \* : “Chiang Kai-shek termed the action of the Communist Party ‘an outstanding example of the triumph of national sentiment over every other consideration’. In a subsequent paragraph he defined the attitude which the Chinese Government would now take towards its former opponents. ‘To all citizens who are followers of the Three People’s Principles’, he wrote, ‘the National Government will extend its hand, irrespective of their former actions or beliefs.....Likewise the National Government will be glad to accept the support of all parties which desire to come under the leadership of the Kuomintang in the struggle for national existence’.....Among the first to greet the reconciliation was Madame Sun Yat-sen... ‘Throughout his life’, she wrote, ‘Dr. Sun advocated the principle of joint struggle for the existence of China. That is why he held that the Kuomintang and Communists should work together....If the co-operation with the Chinese Communist Party which Dr. Sun advocated had continued uninterruptedly until the present time, China would by now have been a free and independent power. Past events are a good lesson. During the present crisis all former differences should be forgotten. The whole nation must join together in opposing Japanese aggression and fighting for the final victory’.....

“Now, with the reconciliation, new legends sprang up. The Communists had never been Communists at all and had now ‘surrendered their principles.’ They had been Communists all the time and still were, had entered the United Front in



order, by wily and devious ways of their own, to undermine and destroy the National Government. The Chinese Soviets had 'finally decided to liquidate their movement completely...and by the summer of 1936 had drifted so far from their original principles that they were actually more friendly to landlords and capitalists than the Kuomintang.' In fact, they were reactionaries. This last 'interpretation' appeared under the auspices of one of the most earnest followers of the egregious Mr. Wang Ching-wei.....

"Early in September, I managed to locate the two Eighth Route Army representatives in Nanking, whose presence and address were still being kept secret from inquiring newspapermen by professionally 'discreet' publicity officials who were slow in adjusting themselves to the new situation...I was fortunate enough to secure for American newspaper readers an authoritative Communist interpretation of the new phase of Chinese political development....."

It ran, "Refuting the suggestion that their party has 'surrendered to the Kuomintang', Chinese Communists maintain that their own Marxist principles dictate the fullest co-operation, both during the war and during the subsequent period of national reconstruction, with the Government they once fought.

"The national war against Japan, they believe, is revolutionary in nature. They state that Marxist theory differentiates between the nationalism of oppressor states imposing their will upon others, and that of oppressed peoples fighting for national liberation. The former is regressive; the latter, progressive. Furthermore, the Communists believe that the country-wide struggle against Japan will teach every Chinese to connect his own personal fate with wider national issues, and therefore to aspire to take a hand in the political shaping of a new democratic China. The Communists advocate mass organisation based on this new consciousness of the people.

"This view has caused the Chinese Communists to make the struggle against Japan the cornerstone of their activity and agitation. Apprehending that the intensification of social strife at this juncture might throw the propertied classes into the camp of peace, or even the arms of the Japanese, Chinese Reds are now advocating the co-operation of all classes in the interests of the war...Communist leaders have assured me that their Party has not been, and will not be dissolved. Its members are

giving everything to the anti-Japanese struggle not because they have 'reformed' but because they consider that it is their duty, as Communists, to do so. " \*

The Communists made not the slightest attempt to cloak the concessions which became necessary for securing the unity of China, for preserving the integrity of the country as a whole. For them, to abandon the Sovietisation of land, or the independent existence of the Red Army, was no surrender of the task of furthering the revolution. On the contrary, in the altered balance inside the Kuomintang, in the changed situation which permitted the resurrection of the whole Chinese nation through a Kuomintang pledged to prosecute most ruthlessly the anti-imperialist struggle, the Communists realised the shortest road to their objective, to the final attainment of their programme.

National Unity would remove the biggest reactionary force from the body politic, the Japanese invader with his polluting fascist agencies. Once the Japanese were defeated, China would attain a world status, never reached in all her history. Foreign concessions and extra-territoriality would be phrases of the past. The very process of defeating the Japanese would create a new China, a democratic China, an armed China, a disciplined China, an awakened China, a China which would make short shrift of all reactionaries. Every layer of the population would have to be harnessed for the great struggle. Neither the peasant nor the worker, neither the banker nor the landlord, nor the "middle-class" clerk and student, could remain unaffected and indifferent, curled up in his own corner. The Japanese bayonet and the avalanche of fascist bombs would surely bring him on the streets, send him flying inland, pauperised, proletarianised, into the common cauldron. The anti-imperialist struggle would mean the harnessing of every adult, man and woman, every child, so that the flag would never be lowered. Victory would necessitate the enthusing of the nation, the arming of the nation, the yoking of the nation as a whole to one front or the other. Victory could not be achieved by the old methods of appeasement abroad and brutal repression at home. A democratic constitution, a responsible government, civil liberties, tolerance for all political parties with an anti-imperialist policy and programme, these were bound to follow in the wake of national unity, if China was to come out of the ordeal, and make a resounding success of it.



Soviet district into a "special district" within the Chinese Republic; the abandonment of an insurrectionary policy towards the Kuomintang; the abandonment of the policy of confiscation and redistribution of land. This was done to liquidate hostility between these two main parties in China. On the other hand, the Kuomintang agreed to recognise the legal position of the Communist Party, of the Eighth Route Army, and of our special district in Shensi, Kansu and Ninghsia. These concessions on our part represent the limit to which we can go, in the interests of the whole nation. Some elements in the Kuomintang would like to go beyond this limit, and to abolish the independent leadership of the Communist Party within the Eighth Route Army and the special district. But such further concession on our part would definitely not be beneficial to the anti-Jap struggle. The Communist Party now loyally co-operates in the establishment of the United Front, and works for its strengthening and enlargement. The attitude and policy thus expressed is genuinely Marxist, and is designed in the best interests of the Chinese working class, and in the interests of the nation as a whole." \*

But what are the new factors that have created the confidence in the mind of the Chinese Communists that the fate of the 1925-1927 united front will not overtake them again? What is the basis of the shift that has taken place in the Kuomintang ranks, which, for a whole period of ten years of untold brutality and blind rage, left no stone unturned to smash the Communists?

Mao has answered the question in unequivocal terms: "There are four chief factors to safeguard the present National United Front. They are as follows:

"(1) The Chinese people have learnt many lessons in the last decade. They remember what they have suffered in this time—all the bitterness, unhappiness and economic hardship that resulted from the fact that the National Revolutionary Front was broken after 1927. They remember the ten years of civil war. The Chinese people will not let this happen again. They will not allow the National United Front to be broken by one small section of the community. If certain elements try once more to destroy the united front, the majority of the people will refuse to support them. The people will fight for the united front because they know that only through it can the principles of national salvation be achieved.

"(2) These elements which broke the united front in 1927 have also learnt the lesson of the last ten years. They must know that the violation of the united front in 1927 did serious harm to the Chinese nation; and they know that they have had a warning from the Chinese people that a similar betrayal of the national revolution will never be allowed again.

"(3) The Communist Party has also learnt many lessons and experiences from these last years. The Communist Party will use every effort to maintain and strengthen the national united front, with a consistent and democratic programme to encourage the full participation of the Chinese masses.

"(4) The present international situation is much more favourable to the National United Front, than it was in 1927, and will not allow it to be broken again so easily. The international situation now demands rather a strengthening and widening of the united front, to bring it into line with the world front against Fascism and imperialist war. All these factors should combine to preserve the National United front in China so that its aim of the national liberation and the achievement of the Three People's Principles may be successfully reached."

One fact is clear. While Japanese Imperialism threatens the existence of China as a nation, the Communists, whether in the Border Region or in the Army, are pledged to accept Chiang Kai-shek as the Generalissimo, the supreme commander-in-chief. "Lao Chiang" is obeyed, not subserviently and in a sycophant's manner, but as the leader of the nation against the foreign invader, the leader of the national organisation, the Kuomintang. In all public buildings in Yen-an, three pictures invariably grace the walls, of Dr. Sun Yat-sen in the centre, with Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Tse-tung on its two flanks.

"Like Lincoln we are for unity", is the declaration of Lo Fu, the Secretary of the Communist Party of China. The Communists stand for three things: the unity of China, the San Min Chu I, and the war of resistance against the Japanese. And all these three are interlinked. The only way in which the "remarriage" could break, or even temporarily snap apart, is a compromise with Japan by the Kuomintang. But so long as Chiang Kai-shek is firm in his stand against the Fascists, and keeps in check the vacillating elements inside the Kuomintang, the Communists will maintain the front intact, whatever be the price it may exact."

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## CHAPTER III

### NEITHER PINK NOR BLACK NOR BLUE

The position that the Communist Party occupies in China has been a matter of long dispute and longer conjectures by interested and uninterested parties. There are persons who maintain that China has travelled a considerable distance on the road to Bolshevism, and that Chiang Kai-shek is an "undisclosed Communist." There are others who vehemently deny the very existence of Communists in China. For them there is no Border Region and no Communist Party. There might have been crude attempts at primitive utopian-socialist colonies, magnified by the name of Soviets. But these too have now been relegated to the distant and forgotten past. Anyway they were hopeless failures. It is not only that the past is remote; the fact is that the Soviets and the Communists have been totally "liquidated".

Both the extremes are not only misleading, but fundamentally wrong. It is true that the Chinese Republic has made considerable progress from the days of the Manchus, even from the days of Dr. Sun Yat-sen. But the progress is sometimes slow and halting, especially with regard to the realisation of the "Three People's Principles" in actual practice. I. Epstein records: "Far from nearing Communism, however, it (China) has not yet shaken off all the feudal trammels which hinder the advent of even the Western type of parliamentary democracy."

Discussing further the role played by the Communist Party, he writes:

"It (the Communist Party) is the second largest party in the country, but is inferior in numbers to, for instance, the Communist Party of France. The Chinese Communists support the Central Government, which is leading the nation in its struggle against extinction. They do not however hold any ministerial posts in the Government, and they are not represented on the new supreme National Defence Council formed in February 1939. In one respect the position of the Communist Party in China is unique. As a result of special historical

circumstances, it controls armies which form approximately ten per cent of the total military forces, and a special administrative district in which live 1,000,000 of China's 450,000,000 people. 1 Apart from this district, its influence is greatest in the Shansi-Hopei-Chahar Border Area and a small sector of the lower Yangtze Valley,—these regions having been re-captured from the enemy respectively by the Eighth Route and the New Fourth Armies. (In North China, a stable population of 45 millions lives and prospers behind the Jap lines). Throughout the country, the prestige of the Party is far in advance of its numbers or power. This is because it has demonstrated, both on the battlefield and in the areas in which it has had a hand in the determination of policy, the soundness of its analysis of the situation facing the country and the effectiveness of its methods of carrying on the national struggle. The widespread recognition of this fact not only sends students flocking to the anti-Japanese University at Yen-an, but also causes the General Staff (whose chief concern was once the war against the Red Army) to welcome Communist commanders to its deliberations and embody their suggestions in the fundamental strategic plans for the conduct of the anti-Japanese war. All officers of the Chinese Army now undergo training in partisan tactics under one such commander, General Yeh Chien-ying. On the other hand, the National Government has been slow in adopting the political and economic reforms which the Communists hold to be an essential factor in successful partisan warfare, and to which can be ascribed the magnificent record of their own armies, which is recognised by both friend and foe.”\*

So, the Communist Party is very much alive. What it has won in China is not total emancipation, the establishment of Communism. But it can hardly be denied now that it has already secured a good base, a forward and strategic base, from which the fight for social emancipation can be won. It cannot be denied that it has made a considerable sortie right through the enemy's lines, that feudalism and colonial slavery have been pierced to the heart, though not yet killed outright.

The ranks of the Communist Party stand four-square against all assaults from without. From within its ranks we

1 ( *Now 2 millions, as per latest estimate, see "North China Unconquered", Yen-an.* )

hear no squeals of cliques and factions. It is a monolithic structure carved out of solid granite, hewed with the chisel of blood and sweat, an experience which brought it to the verge of extermination, from which it not only revived but has grown from strength to strength. From an initial group of thirteen members who came together as delegates to the First Communist Party Congress in 1921, it touched the figure of 60,000 members in a period of five years. Today its membership is still larger. It has reached eight lakhs.

After close and first-hand observation, Edgar Snow has written : " The solidarity of the Chinese Communist Party, and the comparative absence of cliques within it, is extraordinary in the history of political movements in China..... There is no doubt that a revolutionary party acquires in the process of armed struggle a depth of fellowship which no arm-chair theorists, who run no risk of life to advocate an opinion and a cause, can achieve.....suffering endured in common, or the shared feeling of an early doom, bring men together in a way that reduces minor conflicts of personality and ideology to insignificance, and this experience is probably the deepest fellowship men ever know. For the Chinese Communists it has no doubt been a cement which concealed inner fissures from the outer world... It must be repeated that in Communist theory China is a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country struggling NOT for immediate socialism but to achieve national emancipation on the one hand and to liquidate "remnants of feudalism"—to achieve social democracy—on the other. Adhering to this doctrine for over a decade, and building up an army on the basis of it have naturally developed quite a degree of self-reliance, self-confidence, and independence of judgement. Often during its years of struggle, the Chinese Communist Party was entirely cut off from the Comintern.....Chinese Red leaders had to solve their theoretical problems on the battlefield where a decision was always promptly translatable into terms of comrades' lives... the Chinese ( Communists ) have a fatherland in their own revolutionary victories.....Disgruntled liberals, radicals and arm-chair revolutionaries and reformers all over the world may find an escape mechanism in blaming Stalinism for their own failures and incompetence; as a rule, the Chinese ( Communists ) blame their defeats on nobody but themselves and objective circumstances."



The Central Committee of the Communist party of China consists of fifty-five members, out of which a Political Bureau of twenty-seven members is elected as the executive. The political Bureau meets once in two or three months. A smaller body, the Secretariat, consists of seven members, and functions jointly every week. Each member of the Secretariat is in charge of one or more departments which are twelve in number.

1. Organisation, headed by Comrade Cheng Yin;
2. Propaganda, with Comrade Kai Feng;
3. United Front, originally in charge of Comrade Wang Ming, and now worked by Comrade Ko Chin-tze;
4. Revolutionary Military Council and
5. Overseas Chinese, in charge of General Chu Teh; }
6. Workers and Peasants; 7. Women; 8. Youth and }
9. Cultural Departments with Wu I-chang as secretary; }
10. Enemy Department,
11. Information Committee, and
12. Control Commission, all being functioned by Comrade Kang Sen, the most promising of the rising cadre of the Chinese Party.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung acts as the General Secretary of the Party at the present time.

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Has Yen-an abrogated Socialism along with the past Soviets? Are the Communists in China reds or a mere pale pink which seeks to hide a peasant reform party or a blue, a party of the bourgeoisie, standing for nationalism, and no more? "How red the red"?—These are the questions that have been agitating the non-Communists of China and outside.

Sir Archibald Clark-Kerr, the British Ambassador in China, told Edgar Snow that the Chinese Communists, according to him, were really Keir Hardieans, typically nineteenth-century agrarian democrats. The Generalissimo Chiang himself has repeatedly asserted that there are "no Communists in China".

As against them, we have the statement of Wang Chia-hsiang, the head of the Political Department of the Army, and at present a member of the Polit-Bureau of the Party:

"From beginning to end the Chinese Communists are believers in Socialism.....They will never abandon their ideals and the theories of Marxism and Leninism...The whole pro-

gramme of the Chinese Communist Party consists of two parts : (1) the maximum programme, for the overthrow of Capitalism and the establishment of Socialism, and for radical emancipation through the elimination of classes; (2) the minimum immediate programme of the national democratic revolution.... In order to realise Socialism, the Chinese proletariat must first of all secure the emancipation of the Chinese nation.....The 'Three Peoples' Principles are the programme for this period of national emancipation and democracy. " \*

Mao Tse-tung has also categorical statements to his credit: "We are always social revolutionaries, and we are never reformists. There are two main objectives in the thesis of the Chinese Revolution. The first consists of the realisation of the tasks of a national democratic revolution. The other is social revolution. The latter must be achieved, and completely achieved. For the present, the revolution is national and democratic in character, but after a certain stage it will be transformed into social revolution. The present 'becoming' of the social revolutionary part of the thesis of the Chinese Revolution will turn into its 'being' unless our work in the present phase is a failure, in which case there is no early possibility of social revolution.....Half of the country is already colonised, and the other half is menaced with the same fate. Chinese economy is still semi-feudal in character. China is fundamentally too weak (economically) to support a fascist movement. Those who imagine otherwise and try to 'create fascism' in China, are destined to break their necks. In the present stage of the revolution, the problem of primary importance is resistance to Japanese imperialism. Anti-feudal tasks may for a while be subordinated to the major anti-Japanese issue. Our anti-feudal programme in this period consists of demands of nation-wide democracy, and the improvement of the peoples' livelihood..... The obstacle that confronts the democratic movement is an archaic political system. The problem is how to change that political system without endangering resistance, for unless it is changed, and unless democracy is realised, there can be no victory. Resistance and democracy are the two edges of a single sword. Some people pretend to support resistance but to reject the principle of democracy. In reality, they do not want to use either edge of the sword." \*\*

And again, "We remember the last will of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, where he said that, after forty years, the revolution had not yet succeeded; and that the reason why it had not succeeded was

that the whole of the people had not yet been roused. This is the true spirit of Sun Yat-senism, of Marxism, of any revolutionary party.

"Now our Party and our Army must have these two guiding principles: first, to concentrate our Army to fight the enemy in the most effective way; second, to disperse our political forces to work among the Chinese masses and rouse them thoroughly to join the struggle for national liberation and the democratic revolution. In order to rouse the masses to support us we must improve their own livelihood. We must abolish heavy taxes and lighten the economic burden of the masses. The Chinese people must be given arms to form partisan and mobile units, to co-operate with their regular armies.....If we can only organise such a mass war as this, then very soon the Japanese armies will have no spirit left for fighting, and will begin to turn against their own commanders. So that is our task now—to allow no talk of compromise or surrender but to work to prolong the war, to achieve the full co-operation of the whole Chinese people."\*

And then, Po Ku, another member of the Polit Bureau, has said: "We must struggle for leadership everywhere and at all times. We do not deny that. A political party that does not lead has no reason for existence."\*\*

What do the Chinese Communists seek this leadership for? The answer is clear in their repeated theses which are public documents for all who care to read. "While admitting the fact that the Kuomintang, which they call the 'party of the landlords, capitalists and compradores', now holds the national power, the Communists do not recognise its leadership of the main stream of the Chinese revolution. This, they believe, belongs to the peasants and workers, over whom they themselves claim 'hegemony.' When the leadership of the national power in the Government coincides with the leadership of the working class, then the tasks of the national democratic revolution will be quickly accomplished, they believe. The struggle for leadership thus continues now during the united front as in the past during civil war, and as it shall in the democratic republic, if realised." \*\*\*

So opines Edgar Snow.

But the Communists do not approach the problem of united front from this angle. They emphasise unity and united work-

ing for the attainment of the immediate objective of defeating the invader and democratisation of the constitution. They claim that the workers and peasants must be allowed to co-operate in the national front, a united national front, and not be barred out as the "one party" enthusiasts of the Kuomintang seek to do. They declare that the Communists are the driving force of the united front and of the revolution today. They differentiate between the Kuomintang and the Central Government, and inside the Kuomintang itself they realise there are reactionaries and progressives. They do not mix up Chiang Kai-shek with the Kuomintang, because they know that even though he is the most outstanding member, the power in the Kuomintang rests mainly with the two Chen brothers and their group, and General Ho Ying-chin and his group. But there are progressives inside the Kuomintang too, as against these reactionaries and saboteurs of the united front, who are sworn foes of the Communists. Just as much as inside the Central Government, there are many who are not Kuomintang members at all and others who refuse to support the splitting tactics of Ho and the Chens.

"The Communist Party has put forward the slogan of a 'Democratic Republic' for China. This involves something that cannot be achieved in two, or three, or even four or five years. It must be a long process that eventually will realise national liberation for China, a democratic system of government, and the improvement of the people's livelihood. Inevitably if it is to succeed, such a republic must be built with the full co-operation of the working class."

Thus Mao Tse-tung summed up the attitude of the Communists. That remains the basis of the policy of the Party even today.

"We have achieved much by practising such a policy, and we have received the approval of the people of the whole country. However we admit that there is the weakness that a part of the Communist Party members are not well accustomed to democratic co-operation with people outside the Party. The incorrect idea of a narrow, close-door ideology and sectionalism still exists. They do not understand that the Communists have the responsibility to co-operate with people outside the Party, and not the right to reject people outside the Party. This is the principle of listening to the masses, in close connection with the masses, without departing from the

masses. There is an item in the programme for administration in our Border Region which states that Communist members must co-operate with people outside the Party; they must not be dogmatic and play at monopoly. This is purposely written for those Communist members who have not yet understood the policy of the Party. Communist members must listen to the opinions of people outside the Party and give the right to other people to speak. If what other people say is right, we must accept it and learn from other people. Even if other people make a mistake, we allow them to express their ideas in full; then we may convince them with the truth, through methods of reasoning and explanation. Members of the Communist Party must not be so self-conceited and haughty to think that they are the only people who are good and others are all bad; and shut themselves in a room, quite contented with themselves. Except the enemy, the traitors and those who do harm to the resistance war and national unity, everybody has the right to speak, even if his speech is not always correct. National affairs are the public affairs of a nation, not the private affairs of a single party or group. Therefore members of the Communist Party have the responsibility to carry out democratic co-operation with the people outside the Party, and have no right to deny the rights of other people. The Communist Party is a party which works for the interests of the nation and the people; the party itself has no private goal to strive for. It should be under the watch and guidance of the people; it should never be contradictory to the will of the people. Its members must place themselves *AMONG* the people, not *ABOVE* the people.

"Comrades, our principle of carrying out democratic co-operation with people outside the party is consistent and remains unchanged. Now we must realise it in the meeting of the People's Political Council.....At the same time, I should like to ask those comrades outside the Party to approve our policy and to understand that the Communist Party is not a sectionalist small group which strives for its selfish aim, but rather that the Communist Party wants to place national affairs on the good and right track, whole-heartedly and most earnestly.....We are not afraid to expose our weaknesses. We shall correct them. We shall wipe them out through democratic co-operation with people outside the Party. We shall strengthen Party education to wipe out these weaknesses. This

is called attacking the weaknesses both from within and without, so as to serve national affairs well.”\*

The Chinese Communists had abandoned the foreign word “Soviet” (pronounced “Su-wei-ai” in China) in favour of the Chinese word for “Council”: “tsan-yi-hui”, when the Soviet Region became the special Border Region. This change in name and the removal of the star-badge on the cap of the Red Army man, were sufficient evidence for many that Communism was now abandoned by the Chinese Communists, and that they had become respectable “liberals”.

Edgar Snow records: “The Communists had written and preached till they were black in the face to prove that the Chinese Soviet was *NOT* Communism, but a stage in the democratic revolution; as long as they clung to the word, however, few doubted that they were agents of the devil. Life under the old Soviets in North-west China seemed to me to differ mainly in nomenclature from life under the Border Region Government. All the social reforms remained. The mass organisations were there under new names..... Opium had been thoroughly suppressed; there were no beggars, gangsters or prostitutes. The land reform had been upheld...but additional land redistribution was suspended.....”\*\*

And yet the change, the alteration, the “metamorphosis”, for the bewildered capitalist world was great when they compared it with “free” China under the Chungking dispensation. What they had thought was rigid, was found to be extremely flexible. They had been fed on the belief that the Communists were unreasonable bigots and intractable fanatics. They showed themselves to be realists, unconcerned with false ideas of prestige, only concerned with the advance of the nation as a whole, the freedom of the country, the securing of democratic rights for the myriad masses, the guaranteeing of the happiness and progress of the “dumb millions”.

Edgar Snow has given his personal opinion: “My personal feeling in the matter is that liberals who build up hopes that the Communists in China are ‘different’ and ‘only reformers’ and have abandoned revolutionary methods to achieve their programme are doomed to ultimate disillusionment. These men are nationalists because they are in a nationalist united front phase of revolution, and they are perhaps strong enough in their own right not to fear becoming submerged as puppets of anybody.

But their religion remains international socialism, and if conditions change, they may adopt whatever methods they believe necessary in order to 'stay on the locomotive of history.' \*

Not pink compromisers of Socialism, nor black Fascists, nor blue "true-blooded nationalists", but men with feet firmly planted in the soil of China, Red realists, Red Marxists.

## CHAPTER IV

### ZIGZAGS OF THE UNITED FRONT

There is a saying in China that when you play the fiddle at the top of the state, what else is to be expected but that those down below dance? To understand the various vicissitudes through which the Communists have passed in the period since 1937, we shall have to examine the actions of the men in China of the fiddle at Chungking.

"Until 1937, China was torn by continuous civil war, which made impossible any effective national unity against the invaders. The 'anti-Communist' wars carried on by the Kuomintang government were stimulated chiefly by Japan, which constantly protested that it was the influence of 'communism' in China which made necessary Japanese encroachments as a measure of 'protection'. It must be said, too, that British and American policy also encouraged this fratricidal strife. In 1935, the Chinese Communist Party began a persistent campaign throughout China calling for a cessation of these wars and for a national unity of all forces to resist the Japanese encroachment. This campaign came to a dramatic culminating point in 1937 with the Sian events, the mutiny of Chang Hsueh-liang and his capture of Chiang Kai-shek. Since this was a turning point in Chinese history, it is worth reviewing again, especially as it is so little known.

"Chang Hsueh-liang is the son of Marshal Chang Tso-lin, ruler of Manchuria for a generation until he was murdered by the Japanese in 1928 (his train was blown up by a bomb as it approached Mukden.) Chang Hsueh-liang joined the Kuomintang government after the murder of his father and in 1936 he was sent at the head of an army to subdue the Chinese Soviet districts in the North-west where he established headquarters in Sian. His army did not relish fighting against fellow Chinese and came under the influence of the Chinese Communist propaganda for a national front against the Japanese. Chang Hsueh-liang was himself converted to this idea and ceased his military operations against the Communists, at the same time beginning conversations with them. At this juncture, in 1937:



Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek flew to Sian in an airplane to inspect the situation. Chang Hsueh-liang imprisoned Chiang Kai-shek and threatened to kill him unless he promised to stop the civil war and make peace with the Communists, in order jointly to resist the Japanese invaders. Fortunately, there was present in Sian one of the Chinese Communist leaders, Chou En-lai, who was personally acquainted with Chiang Kai-shek. Knowing that threats could not influence Chiang Kai-shek and that death would be a serious blow against national unity, Chou En-lai undertook to mediate between the mutinous general and his Generalissimo, finally inducing Chang Hsueh-liang to release his captive and himself to surrender and return to Nanking as repentant mutineer. This incident made such a profound impression upon the country and upon Chiang Kai-shek himself that within a few months the Kuomintang-Communist united front was established in fact, the Soviet districts came under the national government with district autonomy, and the Chinese Red Army became the National Eighth Route Army under the supreme command of the Generalissimo. That was the beginning of a united China which in 1938 took up the struggle against the Japanese invaders in dead earnest.

"The Chinese Republic was able to fight Japan because from the beginning of its national struggle against the Japanese it has continuously received military supplies from the Soviet Union. To the shame of the United States it must be recorded that our country was the main source of supplies to Japan, not to China, right up to 1941." \*

After the solution of the "Sian Incident" and the establishment of the united front between the Kuomintang and the Kungch'antang, the period, which began with the fall of Nanking in 1937 and ended with the fall of Hankow in late 1938, may be considered the high-water-mark of Chinese national unity. The rape of Nanking was instrumental in freeing Chiang Kai-shek from the tutelage of the Shanghai Capitalists. Hankow had been the home of a very revolutionary peasantry, with glorious traditions reaching as far back as the Taipings. The working-class in Hankow was only second in size to that of Shanghai.

This is the period during which China finally awakened to the realisation that Japan can be fought and held at bay not by the old positional warfare of Shanghai defence, but by the

new guerilla or partisan technique of the Chinese Communists. In this atmosphere unity prospered.

But even during this "Hankow period," no organisational form could be evolved for this unity. In spite of the popular upsurge round the slogans of democracy and civil liberties, the Kuomintang Party has remained impervious to all pressure, and has refused to acknowledge any other political party or a public institution as legal except when set up and dominated by itself. The Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border Region had become a fact, but a fact which had no legal sanction because the Kuomintang refused to formally validate it. Even the legality of the Communist Party remained in doubt, though informally, in practice, the ban had been definitely lifted. True, at Hankow then resided Comrade Chou En-lai, the liaison-officer of the Communist Party with the Central Government. True, Mao Tse-tung and others had been appointed to the People's Political Council. But the Political Council itself had no legal status. Comrade Chou is the most shadowed man in the capital city, practically a hostage in the hands of the Kuomintang. His influence waxes and wanes with the general tide in the international and national movement.

And yet Hankow was a great advance on the provinces, where the local Kuomintang Generals still carried on the traditions of the old-time lawless war-lords. The amnesty declared in 1937 for all Communists behind jail bars, remained a dead letter for them. As late as 1940 two American visitors in South Kiangsi, found to their astonishment sixty Communist political prisoners in a single jail, rotting since 1934. In Hankow itself assassinations of Communists, raids on their newspaper offices, in the best fascist style, were not unknown.

As against this, it must be admitted that Chiang Kai-shek, whenever he has been approached with such incidents, and when he has felt free to exert pressure—a contingency not always in the sphere of the possible,—he has demanded that the aggressors restrain their hand from future repetitions of their misdeeds and implement the policy of unity. But governmental machinery as such still does not exist, and all that happens is a warning from Chiang and the rousing of the social conscience of the masses.

And this is not surprising. The Kuomintang held its last elections in 1933, four years before the "Sian Incident"

in the midst of the most vicious stage of civil war. The position is best illustrated by the fact that whereas none of the Communists and some of the staunchest anti-Japanese fighters can claim to be members, some of the members of the Japan-sponsored puppet regimes can still legally claim a seat. No fresh election has been held on the plausible plea that the exigencies of war-time do not permit the holding of a really popular election. The Communists have held the most elaborate democratic elections in the Border Regions where they work, based on adult franchise of both sexes. And some of these regions actually lie in *Jap-occupied areas*. But vested interests inside the Central Government, whose position would naturally be threatened by any such election, have set their faces hard against any proposal for the democratisation of the constitution.

During the "Hankow-period", a new innovation was made. A People's Political Council was appointed, nominated by the existing Kuomintang Government. This Council was composed of 220 members chosen from the different political groupings in China as a whole. It was to be a purely advisory body, and remains such to this day. Even the Communist members who are appointed to it were handpicked by the Kuomintang inner clique.

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What is the status enjoyed by Chiang Kai-shek, the one man boosted in the world as *the* leader of China? Till lately he had no constitutional powers at his command, being neither the elected President of a democratic republic nor the foisted fascist dictator.

"His status is more like that of the early kings who emerged from feudalism through the allegiance of many rival lords. If he greatly desired, he might get rid of any individual minister in the government or any individual general in the army, but only by political combinations and pressures, which might sap his power in another direction. He has no conception of what is meant by 'rule of the people'; he once said, 'If the people rule, then how can I rule?' This is the testimony of Anna Louise Strong recorded after personal \* observation of and close association with Chinese politics.

"Here is a man who puts his goal first, who chooses and pursues relentlessly any means likely to lead to its attainment; a man who remains the symbol of China's unity only because he

thinks of little else. Chiang has eschewed private gain; his incorruptibility is never questioned even privately in China, a country in which few persons have been free from such questioning.... He may personally prefer democracy as a method of government, but he will make central government his first goal. China must become powerful, and Chiang must use any system and any balance of forces which can secure power for his country and for himself so far as he represents it. His opportunism in matters of methods is uncircumscribed; forgiveness and revenge, pardon and execution, political machination and political frankness, public statement and private thought—these and not the more abstract virtues he uses according to the needs of the moment and in view of the alignment of forces within and without China to the end of a new concept and new reality of nation..... The Central Government with Chiang at its head has been walking a tight rope; it has walked skillfully; it has permitted opposing factions to shake the rope; but it has stayed on top. Today the Government is solidly balanced.” \*

And this from an admirer of Chiang, who says: “Chiang is in a certain sense China.....”

Another observer, I. Epstein, records: “An astute politician who had built the edifice of his power in the past by bringing under his banner every potentially-dangerous group whose hostility could be tempered by the sweets of office, he saw that he had left out of this carefully erected structure the strongest political force of all—the democratic and national aspirations of the Chinese people themselves. Japan was driving him to the wall. He saw clearly that for China’s survival and his own it was necessary to go with the tide and not to oppose it. He made his choice and has kept to it unwaveringly.

“The whole country adopted a new slogan: ‘Support the leader against Japan.’ The old Kuomintang slogan had been simply ‘support the leader.’ The two additional words contained in embryo the whole meaning of the transformation wrought in Chinese politics. Chiang Kai-shek had been ‘leader’ unconditionally, but, as the Sian Incident showed, his power had been built on sand. Now, after Sian, he had become really a leader, which all parties, including the Communists, putting themselves under his orders. But to this leadership a condition was attached. It was to be leadership against Japan—leadership in harmony with the life-interests of the great Chinese people.

Chiang Kai-shek had been the chief of a military dictatorship, sitting uneasily atop of boiling cauldron of internal contradictions. He was now the highest commander of a united people in its struggle for existence.

"Of course the transformation did not come overnight. The heritage of the past was sloughed off slowly and painfully."\*

And who is responsible for making the transformation as halting and as tortuous as possible?

Undoubtedly the minister of War, General Ho Ying-chin, the bitterest foe of the Communists is one of the principal culprits; he has fought them in the past on battle-fields, and fights them today from behind Chiang Kai-shek and the Central Government. He is notorious all over China for the number of agreements he has proposed and put through with the Japanese in the past. The 1935 Ho-Umetzu agreement could not even be published in China. It agreed to give Japan free reign over North China, and demonstrations of students shouted "Down with Japan" in the same breath as "Down with Ho Ying-chin" when the secret leaked. He opposed the declaration of the present war against Japan. And today he holds, because of military intrigues, the strategic position of Minister of War for the efficient conducting of this war. He has built up a huge military machine obedient to his word, and is reputed to be more influential than Chiang himself with the caste of Kuomintang Generals. In certain responsible quarters in Chungking it is openly asserted that Chiang Kai-shek could not depose him even if he chose.

At Chungking, even the informal atmosphere of an attempt at tolerance of other political parties, soon died down. The bankers of the coast-line now realised that they must rally to the support of Chungking in order to burrow from within, first the united front with the Communists, and then force the pace of settlement with Japan.

Anna Louise Strong declares that in December 1940, when she was in Chungking, no public meetings were permitted without a representative of the police being present. The police officer was armed with the power to interrupt speeches as soon as he thought that the strait-laced bounds were being crossed.

John Taylor summarises the position: "The 'Sian Triangle' has asserted itself again. The 'capitulationists', who would rather continue as Japanese stewards than see the emergence of a democratic independent China, in which they could

not survive, are now actively obstructing all democratic progress. A 'left opposition', ranging from liberal educators to Communists in the field, demands a war-time New Deal, the enlistment of new forces in the Government, equitable sharing by the rich of the financial burdens of the war, and the devotion of all energies to resistance. At the apex of the triangle stands Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, committed to the war against Japan, using his own compact military and political organisation to keep the capitulators from too much power, but using the capitulators in turn to counteract the influence of the Communists and the democratic left. This is no static balance. Its content is changing all the time. At the beginning of the war it served to keep all elements within the camp of resistance. Today it is acquiring a pre-war flavour, encouraging frictions that seriously endanger resistance." \*

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What are the hardships that the Communists have to put up with in order to keep China unitedly fighting the Japanese invader? In this period of united front, what are the major clashes that have occurred between the Kuomintang and the Kungoh 'antang? What are the complaints against the Communists?

Anna Louise Strong testifies: "The 'unruly expansion' was the chief thing held against the Communist armies by Chungking officials with whom I talked in December 1940. Both Sun Fo and Pai Chung-hsi told me that if the Communists would remain in the areas assigned to them, organise only the authorised number of troops, and obey the local magistrates appointed by Chungking, there would be no trouble." \*\*

The complaint no doubt sounds plausible. What prevents the Communists from fulfilling these simple demands? The answer of the Communists is simple enough. They say: Face the facts. Either the war has got to be won or lost. And we mean to win it. And for winning the war, arming of the people, satisfying the needs and demands of the people, mobilising all the resources of the people, are an absolute necessity. If nobody else does it, we shall have to do it. The Chinese Revolution, China's very existence, cannot be allowed to be snuffed out by a policy of default.

Let us then face the facts.

The area allotted to the Eighth Route Army in North China, and what was demarcated for the New Fourth Army on

the Lower Yangtze till 1941, are both situated considerably behind the Japanese lines, in occupied territory.

The Central Government took responsibility for the pay of 45,000 soldiers of the Eighth Route, and a much smaller number of the New Fourth, whilst the combined total was anything between five to six lakhs. Arms and ammunition were never supplied to either army. Thus the Communist armies campaign from the farthest points of Manchuria to the Yangtze River, from the bleak deserts of Mongolia to the sea-coast of Shantung in the east, with arms made by themselves—an infinitesimal number—or taken from the enemy.

The Communist armies "fight in about four-fifths of all engagements in the occupied areas." Partisans have been trained from the peasants, and armed with guns and rifles secured mostly from the Japanese. In Manchuria alone, there are no less than a lakh of volunteer partisans whom the Reds have "contacted". They have penetrated as far as the sea and held the port of Chefoo sufficiently long to collect customs revenue, and secure shiploads of war supplies. They have smashed up Jap communications everywhere. Chinese proclamations to resist the Jap Fascists appear in city walls and village trees to the distraction of the Japanese who have "conquered" them. These Reds are never static and idle. They are always on the move. They are breaking new ground every week.

Why do not the Communists peacefully hold to the area demarcated for them? Because to sit still would be suicide. Either the war is carried deeper and deeper into the enemy lines, either the Chinese secure a wider and wider base in the occupied regions, either the war is accepted as a war of liberation by the crushed peasantry who must shake off their mode of hopeless fatalism and fear and decide to rise against the invader at all costs, or the guerilla strategy of hitting the enemy here, there and everywhere, worrying and demoralising him, would not finally lead up to its consummation of universal resistance.

Why do the Communists not sit still?

Because activity is the only hall-mark of success in the North China warfare.

As Edgar show remarks: "If the Japanese were to succeed in their 'mopping up' operations in the penetrated provinces.....Chungking would become merely the capital of an economically backward country over near Tibet." \*

It is worth while bearing in mind that the complaint against the Communists is not that they "expand" into territory held by other Chinese Generals, working under the Kuomintang. The complaint is that they spread out too fast in conquered territory, behind the Japanese front lines. The complaint is not that they raise partisans and arm them at the expense of the Central Government or its armies. The complaint is that the arming of the peasants has become a never-ending business with the Reds, even though the arms and ammunition are procured at the cost of the Japanese army, because these partisans naturally look to the Communist armies for their lead. The partisans are spokes in the Japanese wheel, and make life a hell for the invaders, apart from strengthening the morale of the Chinese civilians, especially in occupied territories. But they are potential supporters of the Communists, attracted towards them by their heroic deeds, their uncompromising fight against the enemy,—and that is the danger. The complaint really boils down to this: the Communists are far too efficient, far too successful in rousing the nation against the enemy, far too popular in China. They must be checked. Let the Japanese consolidate themselves to a certain extent, but do not let the Communists expand their influence. China shall not attain freedom by Communist initiative, even though it means protraction of the war and consequent misery to millions for years to come.

Larger and larger groups of emaciated, starved and harried peasants flock to the Eighth Route Army because they know they will receive sympathy, training, organisation and equipment to serve their homeland. If the Communists refused to help them, the only result would be that they would grow demoralised, and ultimately be drafted by the wily Jap agents as puppet troops.

But from where is the food and maintenance for these peasants to be found? Chungking has repeatedly turned a deaf ear to pleas for support. The only option for the Communists was to organise local governments on the now famous "Three-thirds" system, and allow them to tax the countryside. It must not be forgotten that this countryside is new ground recovered from occupied territories. These taxes cover food and other essentials for the armed partisans. The villagers welcome these as their saviours, the only protectors they can find. It is



not the villagers, the local population, who complain. It is the Kuomintang bosses at Chungking who disapprove and protest.

The Eighth Route Army penetrated into Chefoo and collected customs revenue. The money was later claimed by the 'Governor' of Chefoo, a Kuomintang war-lord who had fled from Chefoo ages before, who had lost the whole of Shantung to the Japanese, and who had not helped by even a pie the efforts of the Communist army in this surprise raid. Chefoo could only be held, at first, long enough to collect the revenue and some war munitions before Japanese reinforcements arrived. Of course the 'Governor' had no interest in such a 'fool-venture'. But as soon as it was known that money and munitions had been taken from the Japanese, a complaint was lodged. As it happened, the Eighth Route Army needed the money for the food of the soldiers, and the ammunition for the local partisans, who had risked their lives and considerably shaken the confidence of the Japanese army. When the Eighth Route Army refused to hand over the spoils to the 'Governor', a 'clash' was gazetted by Chungking. The danger signal was hoisted: the Reds are refusing to abide by discipline, to obey the officials duly appointed by the Kuomintang, by the Minister of War, General Ho Ying-chin.

The Communists thus have the option of going ahead, refusing to sit still, not allowing the Japs to consolidate themselves; or paying homage to 'discipline', which would disrupt and ultimately ruin the cause of Chinese independence, for which alone the united front was entered into at the cost of precious gains. Naturally, even at the risk of being maligned, the Communists have unhesitatingly resolved, first and foremost, to be the avengers of the Chinese nation against the blood-thirsty Fascists, and only then to study the fine scruples of war-lords sitting in comparative comfort at Chungking.

... "Within the anti-Japanese united front, the greatest dangers at present are still defeatism, splitting and retrogression. All the defeatist and retrogressive tendencies at present result from the preparations for submission on the part of the wavering elements in our capitalist class. We, Communists, support Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's main policy in the preparation for our counter-offensive: 'Maintain the war of resistance against defeatism'; 'Maintain unity and fight against friction'; 'March forward, not backward'... We must destroy all

retrogressive tendencies, including anti-Communist intrigues and scandals. Political reforms should be instituted to bring one-party rule to an end, by assembling a National People's Congress that really represents the people's will, and by drafting and inaugurating a constitution. This is the way to eliminate the national danger and gather sufficient strength for our counter-offensive....."

This is the spirit of a long resolution adopted by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on October 10, 1937.

CHAPTER V.  
ZIGZAGS OF THE UNITED FRONT  
( *Continued* )

Let us face the facts.

In 1939 occurred the first 'clash'. It was in North Shensi. The Special Border Region had under its jurisdiction twenty-three *hsiens*. Yen-an was the administrative capital. But Chungking has never *formally* admitted the existence of this Communist district. General Hu Tsung-nan, 'Governor' of Shensi, even today Vice-Commander of an Army Zone and Commander of the 34th Group Army (?), decided on his own that the district belonged to him, and sent his troops to occupy it. The other Kuomintang Generals in Kansu collaborated. Four *hsiens* were forcibly occupied. The Communists protested, but repeatedly withdrew their forces to avoid actual fighting. The Eighth Route Army protested to Chiang Kai-shek. No reply was vouchsafed. It is not even known whether the Communist appeals to him reached his hands. But the Kuomintang generals insisted on further advance. The stage seemed to be set for a renewal of civil war. Evidently Chungking was to keep quiet and the local war-lords were to create an incident. There was no option left. Unwillingly, the part of the Eighth Route Army which operated across the Yellow River under General Ho Lung was called home by the Communists to stand guard against further aggression. The effect was instantaneous. The Kuomintang generals abandoned their plans. When at last Chiang awoke to the situation, he 'reprimanded' General Hu Tsung-nan for his action. But the four *hsiens* were never returned to the Special Border Region Government.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Kuomintang generals, with the active connivance of the Minister of War, have built three concentric lines of cement block-houses in ever-narrowing circles on the borders of the Border Region. These are replicas of the tactics which Chiang himself had employed to squeeze the Soviets out of South China, the same preparations as in the days of the Civil War which

had forced the Communists to resort to the Long March across China, the epic march of 20,000 li or about 6,000 miles.

Anna Louise Strong vouches for the fact that, by the end of 1940, two thousand such block-houses had been built.

"Throughout 1940, an armed blockade has separated all Eighth Route and New Fourth Army territory from 'free' China. An estimated one-fifth of Chungking's total forces were diverted to 'watching' the Communists. Students trying to go to Yen-an for education were detained in Sian; if they persisted in their dangerous desire, they were thrown into concentration camps. For fourteen months, the Eighth Route Army claimed to have received no munitions or medical supplies from the Central Government; if any were sent, they failed to get through. Truck-loads of medical supplies sent by Mme. Sun Yat-sen's organisation, the China Defence League, were indefinitely detained. Even a foreign doctor who tried to reach Wutaishan to replace the late Dr. Bethune, was unable to pass, and finally accepted medical service among Central Government troops. One occasion at least is recorded when armed men taking the pay-roll for the New Fourth Army were seized by other Chinese troops of the Central Government; neither the pay-roll nor the soldiers were ever released. Only occasionally could this unofficial blockade be penetrated by men with high prestige." \*

Blockaded in your own country by your own countrymen !

\* \* \* \* \*

"Clashes" of a similar kind have by now occurred in Hopei, Shantung, Anhwei, Kiangsu and Chekiang. The Communists have requested that investigation commissions be appointed, but there is not a single case when their request was accepted by Chungking.

"It was no secret in China that anti-Communist groups in the army and among Kuomintang and Government officials, working in collaboration with the gentry and local militarists with dubious connections, were responsible for countless 'incidents' in the guerilla regions and their environs. I first began to hear hushed reports of these clashes in the last days of Hankow. Later they became almost daily occurrences known to everyone... Factions in the Central Army and the Kuomintang, and of course prominent in the Government, sabotaged the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies in ways which elsewhere would be called fifth-columnism. Such secret organisations as the

'Blue-shirts' under Tai Li, the 'Regenerationists' under General Hu Tsung-nan, the Army Gendarmes, the 'Three Principles Youth Corps' (Brigades), and other groups—all collaborated to carry out what was known as the 'Procedure for curbing the activity of the alien parties'.... There were repeated instances of arrest, imprisonment and execution of men and officers of the Eighth Route Army..... Neutral generals appealed to the Generalissimo to intervene, but he seemed either powerless or uninterested. Finally, General Pai Tsung-hsi, Deputy Chief of Staff, himself went to the Generalissimo and requested him to repudiate the instructions contained in the secret 'Procedure for curbing the alien parties'. Chiang denied any knowledge of it. But the 'incidents' continued." \*

Pamphlets have been published 'exposing' the Communists. "Japanese are only lice on the body of China, but Communism is a disease of the heart." Anna Louise Strong came across information that two lakhs of pamphlets of this nature were despatched from Hongkong alone to the Chinese overseas. Kuomintang military officials have been known to make inflammatory speeches to their armies, asking them to get ready to fight to exterminate the Communists.

"The repression has spread beyond the Communists to all united front organisations; the famous 'Life' bookshops of the National Salvation Movement were closed in ten cities in free China. Many organisers of the Industrial Co-operatives were arrested, kidnapped and even assassinated as 'Reds', a term which might merely cover the jealousy of a local official who failed to get his squeeze from the co-operatives." \*\*

\* \* \* \* \*

There are grounds for believing that in at least three cases, local war-lords—General Shih Yu-shen, General Miao Chen-lien and Admiral Shen Hung-lich—were acting under General Ho Ying-chin's orders to check the Communists, and were co-operating with the Japanese to that end. The Communist General Chu Teh himself wired to Chiang Kai-shek openly charging them with treason. The officers and staff of these Generals supplemented the charges with direct proofs. But the Minister of War refused to budge. The only reply that was ever sent to these charges was when General Ho wired back to Chu Teh: "Do not slander your fellow-generals."

The aftermath is interesting. General Shih Yu-shan was shot for treachery by one of his own brigade-commanders. General Miao Chen-lien was arrested by his own staff and sent as prisoner to Chungking, where the Minister of War set him free. He is still at large, the charges against him have never been enquired into, and his main activities still remain anti-Communist. Admiral Shen Hung-lieh retains his post under the Kuomintang Government.

But a significant thing has happened. The vast majority of their followers have joined, or become allies of, the Eighth Route Army.

Immediately the complaint was passed round from lip to lip: the Communists tamper with the loyalty of the rank and file of the Kuomintang armies; there is no point in having a united front with them.

\* \* \* \* \*

A telegram, despatched by the Eighth Route Army commanders to the Generalissimo, members of the Government, and commanders of the different War areas, is revealing. It was despatched on February 15, 1940 :

"In Hopei, Shansi, Suiyuan, Chahar and Shantung provinces the Eighth Route Army has recovered lost territory and established anti-Japanese bases which defend the vast central plains and all North-west China. Yet there are people who proclaim that the Eighth Route Army must be wiped out. Those very Generals who but yesterday abandoned their territories and fled in the face of Japanese onslaught, now order their forces to attack the rear of the Eighth Route Army, and call such action 'recovery of lost territory'.....Special agents have been sent into the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border Region to create disturbances, while huge armies have been sent to surround it. One day they raid a city, another day they seize a country. Many of these unfortunate incidents have occurred. Yet our fighters stand firm on the anti-Japanese fronts and do not yield an inch. Thus the Eighth Route Army demonstrates its devotion to the whole nation.

"The Sian-Yulin highway and the Lunghai Railway are communication lines of the Eighth Route Army. They are dotted with special agents, and members of the 'Three Principles Youth Corps' intercept and kidnap travellers along them. 'Re-

ception Houses' have been established for the purpose of 'rectifying youths who blindly follow the Eighth Route Army.' Students of our university have no right to travel freely. Once kidnapped, they disappear, or are forced to sign 'statements of repentance', and join the 'training corps.' Many innocent young people have been persecuted in this way.....The insolence and audacity of the special agents know no bounds. They have even established graduated rewards for captured Eighth Route Army men—200 to 300 dollars for first class workers, 150 to 200 dollars for second class, and 40 to 100 dollars for third class. Thousands of despatches circulating false and baseless rumours have been sent out. Tremendous sums have been wasted on disruptive activities..... Does not this gathering storm warn us that there is danger of repetition of the disastrous tragedy of ten years ago ?

"In course of the nationwide anti-Japanese war China has clearly shown progress in the military field but has failed to show relative progress politically. Corrupt officials and greedy local gentry are still freely running about and profiting from the national crisis. Such people thrive on internal dissension..... The situation has reached such a point that our Army, fighting under most difficult conditions, is threatened in the rear, subjected to derision, and has its vital communication lines interrupted.

"An ancient proverb says : ' When high officials refrain from comment, minor officials must speak. ' We cannot remain indifferent to the protests of our men who are fighting the enemy, nor can we any longer suppress our own feelings. Continuation of the present abnormal conditions will be detrimental to the interests of national unity as well as those of the war of resistance. After thorough deliberation, we respectfully request you to despatch General Chen ( Political Director of the National Military Council ) to the front so that he may obtain a clear picture of the casualties suffered by the Eighth Route Army, the number of Japanese it has captured, the amount of territory it has recovered, the number of battles it has fought—and the number of times it has been attacked in the rear and had its communication lines out. "

Needless to add, General Chen never found time to proceed to the north for the enquiry. The telegram remained unanswered.

A representative of the Eighth Route Army summed up the situation in 1940: "We interpret these incidents as meaning that General Ho Ying-chin is ready to co-operate even with the Japanese against the Communists. We do not even know whether the Generalissimo gets all of our telegrams. We believe that Chiang Kai-shek does not at present want to make an agreement with Japan. He wishes to suppress the Communists more and more, but not quite to the point of interfering with the war against Japan. It is a very narrow road. Until now he has been able to take it. But he cannot take it long."

But the situation still persists.



## CHAPTER VI

### ORDEAL BY FIRE

The 'South Anhwei Outrage' cut an almost impassable ditch in the Chinese political field, and very nearly precipitated a break-down in the United Front of the Communist Party and the Kuomintang. When it became known, it created a furore in the ranks of the peoples all over the world. It is the last major 'clash' the world has been permitted to know, even belatedly. Since 1941, Chinese censorship has sharpened its blue-pencil severely.

The Communist New Fourth Army was initially made up of four units, operating on both sides of the Lower Yangtze Valley, an area assigned to it by Chiang Kai-shek himself. After the fall of Hankow, a fifth unit had been formed out of 20,000 disbanded soldiers. Another unit, the sixth, was added from the peasantry on the borders of Honan, Hupeh and Anhwei. A seventh unit came to be formed with the lapse of time, consisting of a large batch of volunteers organised south of the Yangtze. They were too large to be called a Volunteer Unit, and the Commander of the War Zone had frowned on their existence. So, in order to avoid a 'clash', the large majority of these Volunteers crossed the Yangtze and linked themselves to the New Fourth Army, as its seventh unit.

From Hankow to Shanghai, behind the enemy's lines, these seven units operated. They were cut off from each other by some of the heaviest Japanese concentrations. For three years they had been harrying the Jap rear, cutting the Nanking-Shanghai Railway, the Wuhu-Nanking Railway and the Hangchow-Nanking highway. Trains were wrecked, Jap soldiers waylaid, trade between occupied cities brought repeatedly to a standstill. In 1938, they raided an occupied aerodrome just outside Shanghai, and hoisted the Chinese flag. In the first year alone, they had fought 600 engagements with the enemy. No less than 50,000 Japanese troops were locked up in this region to face the continuous danger from the New Fourth Army.

In Chekiang, the Army won epithets such as "Soldiers of God" and "World Army No. 1". A common saying ran: "As in lettuce you eat the heart, so if you join the Army, join the New Fourth."

This brilliant record of its achievements brought only troubles for it from the Chungking Headquarters. All through the year 1940, the New Fourth faced clashes and provocations from its rear by the Kuomintang war-lords. The pay-roll of the New Fourth was seized by them on one occasion; on another, its normal river-crossing, its vital link in the highway to Chungking, and between the units functioning on the two sides of the Yangtze, was blocked by them. The New Fourth even intercepted instructions emanating from Chungking to the local commanders to suppress all New Fourth forces by the end of the year. But the Army was getting stronger all the time. The Kuomintang forces sent to attack its rear were crossing over and joining its ranks, disillusioned by the machinations of their generals.

General Ku Chu-tang was the Kuomintang commander of the War Zone. It was his task to organise and maintain the blockade around the New Fourth. A *cordon sanitaire* was scrupulously maintained. Once a batch of Chinese journalists, under the leadership of a brilliant intellectual, Wu Ta-kwan, visited the New Fourth Army, as they visited the rest of the armies of the War Zone. They were on a 'comforting-tour'. On their return journey, the ill-fated Wu was summoned by General Ku. Wu went to meet the general. He has never been seen again. To a frantic wire from Madame Sun Yat-sen, enquiring about his fate, General Ku coolly replied: "I have never heard of such a man." And the matter had to end there!

To the New Fourth came a 'proposal' in July 1940 from General Ho, to cross the Yangtze and go North, to be merged with the Eighth Route Army.

On October 19, the 'proposal' was converted into an 'order'. Appeals, explaining the gravity of the decision, fell on deaf ears. Here was an order which was really an order to commit *harakiri*. The New Fourth was to vacate its base of operations in the lower Yangtze Valley. But no other Kuomintang troops were taking its place. It would be tantamount to a friendly gesture to the Japanese, securing peace and quiet for them in this vital occupied area, a welcome release of 50,000 Japanese troops.

But General Ho got the Generalissimo to endorse the order on December 10, ostensibly on the ground of maintaining 'army discipline'.

There were several difficulties in the way of immediate compliance by the New Fourth. Only one-tenth of the Army was paid for by the Central Government. A large number of the local peasants, who manned several units, had their homes in the Yangtze Valley, and were not willing to leave because of the certain danger to their homes from the Japanese in case of the withdrawal of the New Fourth.

The Army as a whole had not received a single winter-coat or any equipment to face the severe snow-conditions of the north, to which area they had been ordered to proceed. Arrangements for supplies on the long journey had not been made. Even munitions had not been received for the last eight months. And on top of all this, the path to the north lay directly through several heavy Jap concentrations, which were likely to be informed already of the plans ordering the New Fourth Army to the north.

Even the Kuomintang Generals, whose armies they were to pass, were all the time carrying on surreptitious attacks against the rear and from the flanks. They refused to give a pledge of safe passage.

All that was promised was that pay and munitions would reach the New Fourth after it went north.

Naturally, the motive behind concentrating all Communist armies in the north was open to grave suspicion. The Japanese had always wanted to wipe out the Communists, but they had been too scattered for them,—in front, behind, and all around, and elusive to the point of exasperation. Now the Chinese Minister of War was obliging them by isolating the Communist armies in one corner of the land. It would be so much easier for the Japanese now 'to clean this nest of vipers', by concentrating their 'annihilating campaigns' on this area.

There were twentyseven divisions of Kuomintang troops, 'uncontaminated by previous Red-contact', surrounding the New Fourth Army. Every preparation had been made to relaunch the civil war in case of resistance by the Communists. News of all these developments were kept a strictly guarded secret. Edgar Snow was the first to probe it when the first statement by the Chungking Military Council declared General

**Yeh Ting a prisoner awaiting court-martial for 'revolt'. This was on January 17, 1941.**

What were the salient facts of 'the 'revolt'? We have a version corroborated by prominent Chinese leaders.

General Yeh Ting had received in late December some money towards the expenses of the transfer. On the basis of this, he ordered his army to cross the river and go north. Several batches left, and in safety. The last one consisted of 4,000 soldiers with 6,000 unarmed men and women, consisting of the sick and the wounded, the nurses and the doctors, as also a large part of the headquarters staff, with families. This batch of 10,000 was ambushed by 80,000 Chungking troops, and treacherously attacked in a narrow mountain pass near Maolin on January 6, when it was actually *en route* to the north.

It was the immortal glory of General Shankuan Yun-hsian that his troops rained bullets and shells on men, women and children without distinction, armed or unarmed, from a previously prepared vantage point, when the detachment was proceeding in friendly territory on orders from the Chungking High Command.

The four thousand armed men of the New Fourth defended themselves and the civilians like tigers. For eight days the unequal battle raged, keeping the Kuomintang forces at bay. In the last four days food rations had been exhausted. Then the ammunition gave out. There was no choice but to surrender.

Telegrams and appeals were sent thick and fast all these eight days to Chungking. Of course they were stolidly ignored by General Ho. The massacre of the innocents proceeded apace. Communist representatives in Chungking, when they insisted on an explanation and an assurance, were told that fighting had been already ordered to be stopped. In the National Military Commission in Chungking, on the sixth day, the Minister of War was again ready with glib lies. He said that "everything is proceeding satisfactorily", and that it was much pother about "a slight difficulty", which General Ku had been ordered to solve. Out of the 10,000, two thousand had been killed and four thousand wounded or captured. Nurses, doctors, women, children, technicians and political workers, along with soldiers had paid the price with their lives. The second-in-command, Hsiang Ying, a most brilliant and promising commander, had been killed. What became of General Yeh Ting, the commander, has never been made public.

On January 17, the Chungking Military Council, adding insult to injury, issued orders for the immediate disbanding of the New Fourth Army. Ten days later, the Generalissimo was jockeyed into taking responsibility for the order of disbandment.

This is how the New Fourth Army, the brilliant Communist-led anti-imperialist force, a real thorn in the side of the fascists, was to be liquidated. Only Japan and its fifth-column agents could hope to gain by this,—only fascist Japan and the most reactionary forces of Chinese capitalism, with a stake in the illegal trade with it.

How did the Communists act in face of this mischief? A telegram was despatched by Generals Chu Teh and Peng Teihuei. It was addressed to the Central Government ministers. It makes interesting reading.

"One unit of the New Fourth Army, stationed south of the Yangtze, numbering approximately 80,990 men, under the command of General Yeh Ting, when moving northwards to cross the river in accordance with military orders, suddenly found itself encircled by nearly 80,000 troops of the national armies in Taiping Hsien, north of Maolin in south Anhwei. Fighting took place from January 6 to 12, with heavy casualties, until the ammunition of the New Fourth unit was exhausted and its food supply cut off.

"It is quite evident that the plan of movement defined for these troops in their march northwards by War Zone Commander Ku Chu-tung (i. e., to cross the river from south Kiangsi northwards), and which they followed exactly, was nothing but a trap set by the Government with plans to annihilate the whole of the New Fourth Army.

"According to information secured during the battle from Government troops, this plan of annihilation had been prepared long before; and orders issued by the Supreme Military Council to destroy the New Fourth Army completely, and if possible, capture Generals Yeh Ting and Hsiang Yin alive.

"We, Chu Teh and Peng Teihuei, being far away in North China, did not before clearly understand the plans and intrigues concealed behind these military orders to the New Fourth Army to move north. But now it is obvious that, while our Government seems comparatively unconcerned about action against the enemy (Japan), against our army it seems to have tried to achieve a position from which it can annihilate us completely.

"We are compelled to ask : Who is responsible for these criminal acts ? For the widespread preparations to attack our Eighth Route officers and to victimise Communists all over China; for the intensification of the blockade against the North-West; for the concentration of more than twenty divisions of Central troops in Central China in order to launch a general offensive against us ?

"What sort of situation is now developing in China, when our Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies are receiving blows from the Japanese at the Front, and are being attacked by our own National forces from the rear; when all those who obey military orders receive the official praise of the Government in the form of an attempt to wipe them out; when those who are faithful to an anti-Japanese policy are rewarded by murder and assassination ? If this is to be taken in silence, then we should say there is nothing more that any human being could stand.

"We request our Government to withdraw their troops, to abolish the concentration for an anti-Communist blockade of the North-West, and to stop the nationwide policy of the Kuomintang of victimising and even killing Communists. If these demands are met, then it should still be possible to proceed on a basis of cooperation, but we consider that we, Communists of China, have now reached the final limit of concessions on our part. We hope the Government and the Kuomintang will not play with fire, but if they insist on doing so and burn themselves, we will not be responsible."

The Revolutionary Military Committee of the Communist Party of China issued an order re-organising the New Fourth Army under Commander Chen Yi. He had been the Commander of the First Unit of the New Fourth Army. The Committee spokesman made public charges, describing fifteen links in the chain which was connecting high officials in Chungking with the Japanese, fifteen links of the foul plot to smash the united front between the Communists and the Kuomintang, to annihilate the Communist armies, to cooperate with the Japanese at first secretly, later by an open peace treaty. Out of this chain, the first two links were the barrage of anti-Communist propaganda let loose in China and in the world in general, and the plan to wipe out the New Fourth Army in isolation, by a trick, ordering it to the North from its invaluable base.

The Committee made it plain that in case of any further attack on the newly organised New Fourth, the Eighth Route

Army would move promptly to its aid. In the meantime, it ordered the reconstituted New Fourth to continue its fight against the Japanese from north of the Yangtze, in the name of Chinese nationalism, "while keeping a wakeful eye against any sudden treacherous attack by any pro-Japanese elements."

Chou En-lai, the liaison officer of the Eighth Route Army in Chungking, issued a statement declaring that the Communist armies had been forced to withdraw to the Chiang River line, as they were anxious to avoid a clash with the Central Government troops. Now that the Generalissimo himself had appealed to the Eighteenth Group Army (the new name of the Eighth Route Army) to move immediately to the support of the Central Government troops in the 'most important battle' now raging in North China, the Communist armies, he said, were already attacking the Japanese lines of communication in Shansi and Hopei provinces.

Wiser counsels seem to have prevailed with the Chungking Government at last. No further baiting of the Communists was immediately attempted. It was realised that vast forces of the Central armies would have crossed over to the Eighth Route Army in case of open civil war. There was yet another danger too. If Chungking was no more the symbol of Chinese unity, quite a number of the generals would have lapsed back to their old war-lord profession. Two of the sea-coast provinces, and Yunnan in the far South, were likely to go either the Wang Ching-wei way or fall apart.

On January 12, Madame Sun Yet-sen led an influential section of the Kuomintang members in deputation to Chiang Kai-shek, on the floor of the Central Committee of the Kuomintang, demanding the resumption of the united front with the Communists.

Marshal Fen Yu-hsiang pointedly referred to the fate of France and Poland, when discussing 'internal dissensions' and the need for 'national solidarity' in the National Military Commission at Chungking.

General Yen Hsi-shan declared from Hongkong: "There are undesirable elements in the Kuomintang which directly threaten our war of resistance and indirectly give the Japanese assistance.....The entire nation dislikes them.....They provoke the progressive elements to disobedience to the Central Government."

On January 18, General Sheng Shih-tsai, Governor of Sinkiang Province, reviewed the achievements of the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies, and said that there was not a shred of evidence to justify 'punitive action' against them. He gave out that in case of civil war, the armies of Sinkiang would stand solidly behind a policy of unity, resistance to the Japs, and struggle against all those preparing to sell out to Japan under cover of so-called 'punitive action'.

After being within inches of a civil war, China has once again been saved. China has been once again saved by the refusal of the Communists to be provoked into civil war, and by the democratic conscience of the Chinese nation that has been awakened by their propaganda and exploits against the Japanese. But it was touch and go. Japan in 1941 came within inches of winning the War. Its agents had almost done the trick. But the seeds of a new China—planted by the Chinese Soviets and the later Border Region, by the Red Army and the later Eighth Route and New Fourth and the Eighteenth Group Armies—have taken deep root. The people have been awakened. The Communist Party, with its patient yet firm policy, has changed the face of the land. The social revolution in China, in the wake of the achievements of the Reds, has grown to considerable proportions. 'Clashes' have occurred even after the Anhwei Incident. In the middle of July 1941, further provocation was offered, and certain Central Government detachments led by reactionary Kuomintang Generals attempted clashes, this time with the Eighth Route Army in Shansi as well as in Shantung. But once again the Communists refused to walk into the trap of General Ho.

Flexibility is the key-note of the Communist policy. The old Chinese proverb has not been forgotten: 'The best chariot-eers do not rush ahead; the best fighters do not make displays of wrath; the greatest conqueror wins without joining issue; the best user of men acts as though he were their inferior.'

"In China three centuries of history are being telescoped into three decades, and into a struggle which, to succeed, must combine certain achievements of the French, American and even the Russian revolutions. Time no longer marches on; politically it dashes. Men in power cannot continue to walk in a world on fire, but must jump while they can still make a safe landing. The longer democratic mobilisation is rejected



in China, the nearer Japan comes to success—for Japan might yet win.” \*

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Earl Browder has reviewed the whole episode from the angle of the anti-fascist peoples of the world. He has thrown very considerable light on the situation as it affects the common man not only in the streets of New York but in every country which struggles for democracy today. He writes :

“ The course of national unity in China after 1937 was not a smooth one. Powerful elements in the Kuomintang continued the ‘anti-communist crusade’, which was also the justification used by the renegade Wang Ching-wei when he deserted to the Japanese and became the puppet head of the Nanking Government. The constant sniping war that continued against the Chinese Communists occasionally broke out in serious engagements, even though Chiang Kai-shek exerted his influence to restrain it. The anti-Communist crusaders justified their course with the argument that the United States continued its unlimited supplies to Japan from fear of the Chinese ‘Communist influence’ and that the only way to win United States’ support was to break the united front with Communists.

“ In January 1941, the Kuomintang-Communist united front relationship was brought to a breaking point with the dispersal and slaughtering, at the hands of a Kuomintang army, of the New Fourth Army led by the Communists. This disastrous event caused even the somnolent United States public to stir in awareness of great danger. The conservative *New York Herald Tribune* of February 1, 1941, in the course of a long editorial comment, said :

“ ‘At this juncture, when Japan is prepared to go marauding in the South Seas, and when the Chinese should be ready, in their own interests as well as in those of their friends, to put all they have into immobilising as big a Japanese force as possible, it is indeed a pity that they are working up a bitter domestic feud. We are confident that Chiang Kai-shek is too big to foster it; and we hope that he is big enough to bring it under control.’

“ The truth was, of course, that stupid American advisers had brought the Kuomintang into this Axis trap. It was not without reason that T. V. Soong exhibited much bitterness, when asked for an explanation of this untimely break of national unity by the *New York Post*, and reminded Americans of their own unbridled red-baiting, which was part of the American pressure upon Chiang Kai-Shek to break the united front.

as the Japanese demanded.

"The frightened uproar in the American press brought from the Foreign Office ( Waichiaopu ) at Chungking a cable of explanation, which was released to the Press by the Chinese Embassy in Washington. This was largely suppressed, however, and is little known to the American public. It is so naively revealing of the realities of the situation that I choose this document to illustrate how the Axis Fifth Column worked in relation to China, rather than anything from Chinese Communist sources. The following is the cable :—

Chungking, January 19, 1941.

"For defiance of military orders and plot to stage a revolt the New Fourth Army has been disarmed and Commander Yeh Ting has been placed under arrest to face court-martial, announced a spokesman of the Military Council. This was entirely a question of military discipline, it was emphasised. The High Command was compelled to take action, because of the refusal of the New Fourth Army to move into designated areas as ordered.

"Early last December the High Command ordered the New Fourth Army south of the Yangtze River to move northward until it crossed the Yellow River by January 31st for operations against the Japanese. The region between Fan-Chang and Tungling south of Wuhu, Anhwei, was designated as the route for the army to cross the Yangtze. To the contrary, the New Fourth Army at King-hsien, sixty kilometers south of Wuhu, started moving in southerly direction toward Tai-ping, the objective being to press an attack on General Shankuan Yun-hsiang's headquarters.

"It happened that the Fortieth Division, transferred from southern Kiang-su, was on its way northward for reorganisation.

"Having learned the route taken by the Fortieth Division and its arrival at San-chi, fifty kilometers south of King-hsien, on New Year's day, the entire New Fourth Army slipped through to Mao-lin, forty kilometers south of King-hsien on the night of January fourth. It spread out in three forces to waylay the Fortieth Division. Taken completely unawares, the Fortieth Division fought in self-defence, whereupon General Ku Chu-tung, Commander-in-Chief of the Third War Area, ordered disciplinary measures to be taken.

"By January twelfth, the entire New Fourth Army was disbanded and Yeh Ting arrested. Furthermore, by order of

the Military Council, the said Army as a unit has been abolished. The Chief of Staff of the New Fourth Army, Chao Ling-po, was among those arrested. According to his statement, as soon as the order for the New Fourth Army's removal was received, Yeh Ting decided to ignore it. While demanding a million dollars from the Government, the New Fourth Army collected its main force at King-hsien and Fan-Chang. Then on pretext of the Japanese blockade, they decided not to cross the Yangtze as ordered, but to penetrate into South Kiang-su.

"The plan was to move into Kin-tan, Tan-yang, Ku-yung, Lang-chi, and Li-yang, to create a special area there with the ultimate objective of setting up a base at Nanking, Shanghai and Hangchow, thus forming a triangular area to defy the Government. On January 3rd, they decided to attack points in the vicinity of Ning-kuo in southern Anhwei, raid the military store there, and assault General Shankuan Yu-hsiang's headquarters. Later the left wing would advance to Lang-chi toward Li-yang and attack other Chinese units. When such a situation was created, the New Fourth Army hoped to coerce the Government into accepting their demands.

"The speedy liquidation of the crisis, according to the spokesman, was largely due to the fact that officers of the New Fourth Army decided not to side with the rebels but to join the loyal Government troops.

Chinese Embassy,

Washington, January 21, 1941.

Waichiaopu,

"Now, of course, to the general American reader all this has the incomprehensibility that is popularly described as a 'Chinese puzzle'. It is little wonder that the newspapers could make nothing of it at the time, but those who know China understood it completely then, and history itself has since provided the keys for even the layman to penetrate this puzzle. Let us proceed to unravel it in simple American terms :

"First of all, we may disregard most of the details in this long cable. I have printed it in full only in order that I may not be accused of hiding anything in the official version. These details are largely disputed by the Chinese Communists, but we are not interested now in judging the issue of veracity as to these details. What is important is the *policy* revealed, and the *situation* which is disclosed.

"The policy of the New Fourth Army is declared to have been that of 'setting up a base at Nanking, Shanghai and Hangchow, thus forming a triangular area'. That area is the key to the whole central China coast and the Yangtze valley. It was, and is, occupied by the Japanese. The New Fourth Army was, therefore, striking at the heart of the Japanese occupation of China.

"The policy of the Kuomintang general in charge of that Third War Area is revealed to have been dominated by a fear that the New Fourth Army, once it had seized that base, would 'defy the Government'. Therefore he decided to prevent this ousting of the Japanese, and to disperse the New Fourth Army violently, rather than permit it. He considered that Japanese occupation of this area was preferable to its occupation by the New Fourth Army.

"The situation revealed is that, in the judgment of the Kuomintang general, it was possible that the New Fourth Army would succeed in this project. If it failed, it would be destroyed by the Japanese, and there would be no occasion for General Ku Chu-tung to slaughter one of his own armies. That he decided to do the job himself proves that he feared success, not failure, of the attack against the Japanese forces. He cold-bloodedly decided to protect the Japanese against this assault—moved probably in part by the desire to placate the 'anti-Communist' forces in the United States.....

"The opportunity to seize from the Japanese that great area of Shanghai-Nanking-Hangchow was lost. The 'discipline' of General Ku Chu-tung was 'vindicated'. The anti-Communists of the United States, Great Britain, Germany, and Japan were reassured of the 'purity' of the Kuomintang from 'Communist taint'. But the net result was a terrific blow against the national liberation of China, a tremendous strengthening of the position of Japan, a shaking of the whole structure of national unity in China, a defeat for the later-organised United Nations which contributed materially to the debacle one year later in Malaya, Singapore, Indonesia and Burma. The whole thing was a Chinese repetition of this story in the further conduct of the war. The lesson of these events *must be learned* as a military necessity for the victory of the United Nations over the Axis. And they must be learned by all thinking persons in every country. If we keep on repeating

such disastrous mistakes, then we are handing victory over to the Axis, we are digging our own collective graves.

"The Chinese Communists did not permit this horrible provocation to break their relations with the government of Chiang Kai-shek. They patched up the situation as best they could, although it is evident that this blow terribly decreased the effectiveness of the whole of China against the common enemy.

"Difficulties between the Kuomintang and the Communists do not arise from ideological conflict between capitalist and socialist proposals for the organisation of the country. The Chinese Communist Party accepts the perspective of a capitalist development of China, not only now but for an indefinite future. The Chinese Communist Party is not challenging the Kuomintang for the leading role in the country; it accepts the dominant role now played by the Kuomintang. It is not attempting to weaken the Central Government, but on the contrary does everything in its power to help the Central Government establish its power in reality over the multitude of diverse forces that still operate within Republican China.

"Whence, then, come the continuous difficulties between the Communist-led forces and the Kuomintang generals? They arise out of differing methods of conducting the war and different relations with the population of the war areas. The Kuomintang generals are trained in the methods of warfare of the German and Japanese schools, while the Communist military leaders arose out of the movements of the people; the former impose their plans upon Chinese population, while the latter mobilise the population for the war and base themselves upon the population; the former wage the war strictly by traditional military methods, while the latter wage a people's war. In this difference, and in this primarily, lies the secret of the remarkable successes of the Communist-led armies in China. And it is in the main the lessons of these successes, inescapably learned by the Kuomintang military leaders in spite of their education and imposed upon them by necessity, that have brought the mounting degree of success of Chinese military operations against the Japanese.

"The traditional military officers must depend upon the importation of arms from abroad (mostly from the Soviet Union); the Communist-led armies have almost entirely armed themselves with *Japanese* equipment, seized from the enemy.

The traditional generals receive huge finances from the Government, and still they have bad relations with the population; the Communist-led armies receive practically nothing from the Government and live almost entirely upon the population, but their relations with the people are outstandingly successful. It is the clash between the Communists and the Kuomintang generals, which still bedevils Chinese national unity.

"This people's character of the Communist-led armies in China has been widely recognised in the United States. Even such an anti-Communist newspaper as the *New York Herald Tribune* finds it necessary to speak of their distinctive qualities in the following terms :

" 'A dozen correspondents and at least one competent American military observer have been behind their lines and have paid enthusiastic tribute to their splendid spirit, their amazing cleverness in getting through, between, and behind the Japanese lines at their pleasure, their good discipline and Spartan mode of life and their excellent relation with the country folk, whom their agents have organised for guerilla operations in every district the Japanese have allegedly conquered.'

"Today, with supply routes from America to China almost entirely cut by the Japanese, with the terrible pressure of war making it more difficult for the Soviet Union to supply the Chinese armies (the Soviet Union has never supplied the Communist-led armies), it becomes more than ever clear that the general adoption throughout China of these methods of the Chinese Communists furnish the only possible road to victory for that nation over the Japanese invaders, as a part of victory for the United Nations.

"Those who see no possibility for carrying on the war except by the methods of the traditional military schools are preparing the ground for a defeatist party in China, for moods of capitulation to the Japanese. This is especially true since these old-school military men are able to speak up in Chungking with the cynical remark that 'they got along better in the war while the United States was out of it than since'. The old-school military men in China are on the whole true patriots of their country, but the nature of their military training has always made them more susceptible to the undermining influence of defeatist moods, and when such moods begin to spread and crystallise they lead directly to the borders of treason. We must always remember that it was defeatism which transformed

the brilliant officer of our revolutionary army of the War of Independence, Benedict Arnold, into the blackest traitor.

"Thus it must become clear to the American people, and to the whole United Nations, that China, one of the keystones of our world alliance against the Axis, will more and more have to learn the lesson of how to conduct a people's war, a lesson which has been and is being taught by the Chinese Communists. Because the Chinese Communists are a necessary factor in Chinese national unity and military success, the whole United Nations have direct interest in understanding them and establishing a correct attitude toward them.

"Because the Chungking government still believes that good relations with Washington require the continuance of the policy of suppression of the Communists, those in the government who wish to stabilise Kuomintang-Communist co-operation are blocked at every turn. As a result, to-day the pick of China's fighting forces are still not being used against the Japanese. General Hu Chung-nan, with 440,000 crack troops, is engaged in blockading the Eighth Route Army in the north and northwest; General Tang En-po with 500,000 crack troops is occupied in blockading the present areas of the New Fourth Army in Central and Eastern China. Thus China continues divided, though civil war no longer rages, and a large part—the most efficient part—of China's armies is not used against the common enemy. And the most decisive reason for this is the 'red scare' in Washington.

"The Chinese Communists themselves are doing everything possible to dissolve the old barriers of distrust and suspicion upon which the 'Anti-Comintern' Axis Fifth Column builds its work.

"I have dealt at length with the position of the Communists in China, because this is particularly the point of vacuum in the understanding of that country by most Americans. So long as this vacuum is occupied by the prejudices and misinformation assiduously spread by the Axis agents, just that long will our understanding of China and her role in this war be incomplete and our attitude and policies towards China be distorted.

"China, like the Soviet Union, furnishes an acid test of our ability to survive, to win victory out of this war." \*

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And yet, after all, the Chinese Communists have not lost

their patience with the United Front. The latest authoritative statement confirms this.

In an interview given on December 8, 1942 to the reporter of the *Liberation Daily* in Yen-an, the spokesman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party expressed his opinion about the statement of the Tenth Plenary Session of the Kuomintang Fifth Central Executive Committee and the report of the Special Research Committee as follows :

"We are of the same opinion as the Tenth Plenary Session of the Kuomintang on the determination to resist to the last and to strengthen unity. Much of what the statement said is correct :—'Before the final victory is won, a most difficult and ruthless decisive battle must be gone through; only then will the enemy be brought to total destruction, and further cause of danger be eradicated'; 'To stand firmly on the principle of self-reliance and prepare for the most difficult tasks'; 'To-day more than ever, we must push forward in big strides, concentrating the entire effort of our four hundred and fifty million people on the fight'; 'Externally, we must seek close co-operation and mutual help, so that the equality of mankind' be realised,—internally, we must be united, so that sincere co-operation be carried out'; 'There must be sincere unity in the country, only then will we be able to shoulder our task of unprecedented difficulty'. This proves that the Kuomintang and the Communist Party are basically of the same opinion on the most important foreign and internal questions. That the Tenth Plenary Session expressed this view is very inspiring. Since the outbreak of the war of resistance the Chinese Communists, the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies, have always been at the foremost front of the war for the fatherland. Although far behind the enemy line, lacking munitions and funds, threatened by cold and hunger, yet they have always obeyed the orders of the Generalissimo, have held their positions firmly, without retreating one single step. Gen. Chiang has said: "Irrespective of south or north, irrespective of old and young, everybody must shoulder the responsibility of participation in the war." The Communists and the people of North China have followed this order, organised guerillas in support of the regular troops in resisting the enemy, for five and a half years they remained as firm as the Great Wall, keeping back and pinning down fifteen divisions of enemy troops, half of the entire enemy forces in North China. It is not without reason that they are able to achieve all



this. As to the policies practised on the anti-Japanese basis, they are all in accordance with Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles, Gen. Chiang's Programme of Resistance and Reconstruction, and the laws of the National Government; other concrete methods are also adopted in accordance with the people's wish, thus making them support the war more heartily and achieve the purpose of protracted resistance. On September 22, 1937, the Communist Party published its statement on 'Shouldering the National Catastrophe together with the Kuomintang'; in it the Party claimed :

" 1. The Communist Party acknowledges that the Three People's Principles are necessary to China at present, and will fight for their complete realisation.

" 2. All policies aiming at the overthrow of the Kuomintang and the movement to bolshevise China are to be abandoned, confiscation of land by force is also to be stopped.

" 3. The present Soviet Government is to be abolished, and democratic government practised, so that national sovereignty be unified.

" 4. The name and emblem of the Red Army are to be abolished, and to be incorporated into the National Revolutionary Army, under the command of the Military Council of the National Government, and prepare to go to the front in the anti-Japanese war.'

"As to what we pledged then, we have kept our word strictly, in the past five years. We will not only follow it during the war with all our effort, we will also follow it after the war. The purpose of all these policies is to seek close co-operation and unity with the Kuomintang and other political parties and groups within the country, and to fulfil the epochal task of resistance and national reconstruction. The various points mentioned in the report of the Special Research Committee and the four points in the statement of the Communist Party have no difference in their basic spirit. As to the attitude towards the Communists, the report of the Special Research Committee stated after its various demands "that the Government will treat the Communists the same as other citizens. It will not regard them with partiality; furthermore, the Government will protect their rights and liberty as lawful citizens.' For several years, we have been earnestly expecting and asking for this, and we are very glad to hear it so clearly stated as in the report. In short, the standpoint of the Communists is entirely based on the anti-Japanese

United Front; everything in accordance with the interests of national unity and resistance has been, and will be, carried out with the utmost sincerity. We hold this view changelessly. We sincerely hope the Kuomintang members will understand our loyalty towards our nation and our people, and further advance their co-operation with us. Though the enemy is strong, he will then finally be driven out. And not long afterwards, an independent and powerful China will soon be built up."

## PART II - THE RED BEACON

### CHAPTER I

#### THE 'BANDITS' LAIR'

Yenan is the capital of the special Border Region. What traditions from the hoary past enshroud this centre of Communist activity in modern China?

The walls of Yenán, or whatever is left of them after the repeated Jap bombings, date from the Sung dynasty, round about 500 A. D. It was then, as now, an 'outpost' of the nation against 'foreign barbarians'.

If we go further back in Chinese history, we find that the oldest traces of Chinese civilisation come from the North-west. It is the loess highlands of Yenán which nurtured the beginnings of Chinese culture, before it spread down the Yangtze River to the South. The irony of history has made Yenán once again the source of a new civilisation that flows from the North-west to the centre and south of China, the new life which is taking shape under the nurturing care of the Communists. As Nym Wales declares: "This old cradle of Chinese civilisation becomes the new cradle of the renaissance movement."\*

Yenan, from the first glimpse, captivates you. It is picturesquely situated, in an ideal setting. It reminds you of a delicate Chinese painting, exquisitely topped by a hoary old pagoda. It is built in a mediaeval valley at the confluence of two rivers, surrounded by steep hills on almost all sides. Apparently, on the face of it, it is a walled town. The hills are studded with half-demolished temples, with the top pagoda standing sentinel, visible to the eye for miles around.

The old city of Fushih, as it is still known locally, is merely one square mile of ruins with walls leading up to the hills on the West and the East. Repeated Jap bombings, which at one time culminated in a raid by over a hundred planes, have left not a single house intact.

Modern Yenán is a city of caves, carved out of the loess hill-sides. Hundreds on hundreds of caves, along nearly twenty miles of the valleys and gorges, harbour a population of nearly forty thousand. Government offices, factories, hospitals, schools

and universities, are all situated in caves. To live in caves is the fashion, so to say. They afford protection against bombing, and are extremely cheap to excavate. For a cave twenty feet broad and twelve feet deep, the cost of 'building' would not exceed twenty rupees. They are reputed to be warm in winter and cool in summer. All Government officials and army dignitaries live in caves. Mao Tse-tung himself had a two-room cave-dwelling as late as 1942.

"Scientifically the study of loess is interesting. But during the rains it is not at all interesting to live in such a region. The rain percolates through the earth until whole mountain-sides collapse and pour down into the valleys, over the roads and houses, burying everything in rivers of mud. Whole roadbeds slip away, whole hills fall with dull roars. I live in a cave in a mountain of loess and the rain soaks through and permeates everything. Little by little the cave falls in and I have often got a good mouthful of mixed rich yellow earth.....

"I could write a volume on this loess country! To understand it one must see it. It is a fine porous earth, without a stone or a bone or a shell in it. Scientists have various theories about it, but the generally accepted idea is that the soil came from Central Asia from what is now the Gobi Desert. Thousands of years ago, Central Asia and the Gobi dried up. Through the ages this went on, the top-soil of Central Asia being deposited in this region. Now, in the same way, North China suffers from the ghastly sand storms from the Gobi Desert. There is no more top-soil to carry, so the winds carry sand. But here in the North-west, this fine porous earth is many hundreds of feet deep, and often whole mountains are composed of it."\*

The capital of Shensi, Sianfu, is situated roughly 230 miles to the South. The road to Yen-an is a rough *kacha* road, in parts so rough that it takes a motor truck anything between three to six days to complete the journey.

Yen-an is a growing town. It stands only second to Chungking in political importance. It is the headquarters of the Communist Party, the second strongest party after the Kuomintang. Apart from the ruins of old Fushih, and the new cave-buried Yen-an, there is yet another Yen-an, well-camouflaged, with new streets of co-operative stores, small industries, banks, bookstalls, and even restaurants. The Indusco factories are spread out in the surrounding valleys, also well concealed. The Political Department of the Eighth Route Army is situated here.

The Kang Ta (army school), the Nu Ta (women's university), the Lushun Ishu Shynan (arts and cultural centre), are all there, tucked away in the folds of the hills and dales around Fushih. Illusive to the Jap bombers, and yet very much alive, Yen-an is the Mecca of Chinese Youth in every corner of the land.

Yen-an is a strategic stronghold of great potentialities. Before the Communists took it over, it was held by the Young Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang. Pao-An was the Red Capital of those days, situated a hundred *li* away to the West. The Communist Army besieged Yen-an for over a year, but no frontal attack was possible. The hills round about offer natural cover of the most perfect kind. A handful could hold up an army and did hold it up.

It was only after the Sian Incident had been happily ended that Chang Hsueh-liang withdrew from Yen-an, thus handing it over to the Red Army. The capital shifted from Pao-An to Yen-an.

The North-west, where the Communists dominate, is five times the size of France. The special Border Region of Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia itself is as big as Britain. The importance of the Border Region is that it is the pivot from which guerilla and other military activities are directed in territory far behind the enemy lines in the whole of the North. From Shensi to the Yellow Sea, and from the Yellow River, as it flows through Hopei and Honan far into Mongolia and Manchuria in the distant North-east, taking in its stride twenty-six counties in four provinces, the whole net-work spreads like a web woven with an intricate design. The Eighth Route Army base headquarters is situated in the occupied areas behind the Jap front lines, exerting a unifying influence on the other Border Region administrations, and especially the Shansi-Hopei-Chahar Region.

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The transformation of the Soviet Region into the special Border Government was enacted in a democratic fashion.

It was in the spring of 1937 that the civil war was practically called off. A Congress of Soviet Delegates, as the representative legislative body was called, was convened. It thrashed out all the pros and cons of the problem of united front. There was to be a six months' interval before new elections were ordered under the newly adopted constitution. An intensive propaganda campaign was undertaken from village to village to

explain the necessity for the change. Every man and woman was goaded to discuss the change, and thus political education of a considerable depth was made available to them. Heated arguments, long-drawn debates, cool and patient explanatory drives, became the order of the day. Old and young, even the children, participated in the campaign for united front and a line-up with the 'hated Kuomintang'. Among the Red Army, the Communist Party, the Young Vanguard, the school teachers, the Children's Brigades, the co-operative organisations, the 'anti-Jap societies',—in the factories, on the fields, round the tea-tables, and at street corners, a common agreed decision was hammered out.

And all this while the War against the Japs did not abate for one moment.

How was the constitution to be altered ?

The first change was to be in the electoral law. It was now to be based on a law which the Nanking Government had adopted, but had never put into practice. The National Government had advertised an 'Outline for Reconstruction', by which local self-government could be granted to any area whose capacity for self-government was vouched for by the provincial officials. As this normally involved that the powers which the official exerted would pass to an elected body, the official was rare who showed himself so progressive or obliging to the 'coolie' masses.

The Soviet Government utilised this basic enactment to grant a wide measure of democracy under the new constitution for the Border Region. It unequivocally guaranteed that its villages and towns had attained fully the requisite 'capacity'.

Under the Soviet Constitution a certain weightage had been secured for the workers and poor peasants. Now, every citizen, belonging to either sex or any class, had the same right to vote or stand as a candidate for election. The ban on the landlord and the capitalist class was lifted. Adult suffrage, universal and equal, the first guarantee of democracy, was assured to everybody irrespective of class considerations. The legal age was raised from sixteen to twenty years.

The Soviets had enfranchised the soldier, the guerilla fighter and the policeman, though they could not stand for elective posts so long as they were on active duty. This provision was left unaltered.

The second change was that the policy of further confiscations of land-lords' estates was given up. Landlords who had been ousted previously were to be welcomed back. Not all of their land was to be returned to them, but a fair share, enough for them to set up in life and live honestly, without exploitation of their brother-citizens. Farmers who had received lands from the Soviets were of course confirmed in their ownership. Any further re-allotment or re-shuffling of ownership rights was not contemplated. Landowners present and working on the soil were not to be disturbed.

Another change was that civil liberties were made available on the widest scale consistent with the war emergency. Citizen rights now accrued to the merchants, the capitalists and the landlords, who had stood outside the pale so far. But "all classes and sections of the people should take part in the anti-Japanese struggle."

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The system of taxation in the Border Region is interesting.

Before the Soviets had arrived in Yen-an, there had been no less than forty-two varieties of exactions, some in the form of taxes, others as feudal levies. The Communists, in their first experiment with taxation, abolished all of them without exception. Later, a tax was declared on the export of wool, hides, salt and certain other state-controlled products. The land-tax had remained suspended for the first three years. In its place farmers were invited to make 'minimum' voluntary contributions, to the National Salvation and Public Food Consumption Fund. In 1939, the quantity required was over-fulfilled by fifty per cent. Out of this fund all government employees received one and a half measures of cereals a day.

The National Salvation Fund, the Chiuko Kungliang, eliminated all exactions and reduced the taxes to a kind of single-tax based on a sliding scale according to the income of the individual. Very poor peasants, with no surplus production, were not expected to contribute anything. The majority of the peasants volunteered roughly one per cent; the 'middle' peasantry two to three per cent; those with an income of over Rs. 400/— comparatively rich, at the rate of five per cent. The landlords who retain all their lands and have escaped confiscation at the hands of the Soviets pay at double the usual rate. The peasant who rents land contributes one-half towards the payment from it to the Fund. Thus a simple and yet effective revenue system has

been evolved, spreading the burden of running the administration and the army almost equally over the different strata of the population according to their capacities, and yet on a basis of perfect co-operation and understanding between the people and the Government,

The administration is extremely simplified, possibly the cheapest in the world. Executive officials in the *hsien* council receive a salary of five dollars a month. This is over and above the one and a half measures of cereals, and four cents worth of vegetables, a day. Apart from this, medical, travelling and incidental expenses are borne by the Government.

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The special Border Region administration is a 'progressive experimental area' with complete democracy, as compared with the other parts of China under the National Government.

The North-west has been considered, economically, to be a backward region for ages. The standard of living is low in comparison with Central or South China. But now rural co-operatives on a large scale are handling the problem. The vast majority of the peasants own their own land, a gift of the late Soviets. Rates of interest are strictly controlled by the government. Profiteering is put down with a heavy hand. Mass social awakening is the key-note of the whole structure. Political training through the development of mass organisations functioning on a democratic basis—that is the weapon chiefly used for raising the level of the region as a whole.

Inaugurating the first People's Political Council, Mao Tse-tung said: "The attitude of the Communist Party is to unite all the forces in China, to overthrow Japanese Imperialism, to co-operate with all the parties and groups and the various races inside China. All the Chinese, if only they are not traitors, must unite to fight for the common aim. This attitude of the Chinese Communist Party has always been consistently held..... In order to win victory, China should continue to struggle hard and to put the Three People's Principles into practice. Because Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles have not yet been realised throughout China.

"Why should we not put Communism into practice? Certainly, Communism is a better system, and it has been practised by the Soviet Union. Nevertheless China today has not yet the conditions to practice it. What we are practising in



the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border Region are the Three People's Principles. None of its work and solutions of practical problems oversteps the Three People's Principles.

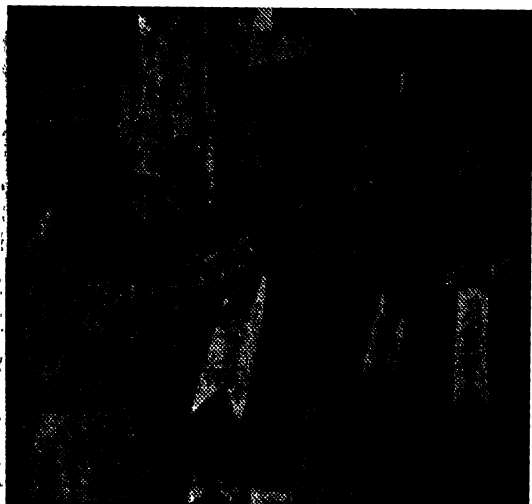
"The principle of nationalism.....is to overthrow Japanese imperialism. The Principles of the rights of the people and the livelihood of the people are in the interests of all anti-Japanese people in this country, not jut a few. People of all classes and nations must enjoy the rights of a man, political and property rights, and freedom of speech. They should have clothing, food, work and education; they should be put into the right place where they ought to belong. Chinese society is a society with two small extremities and a big middle portion. Both the capitalists and landlords constitute a minority only. Therefore the policy of any party, which ignores the interest of the middle portion of the people, denies their right to speak, gives them no clothing, no food, no work and no education, will fail to be a good policy.....

"The Chinese Communist Party has drawn up the 'Three -three system' ( regarding the composition of the government; the government would include one-third Communists, one-third Kuomintang members, and the remainder one-third persons of different affiliations or no affiliations ).....It is a policy which gives opportunities to people of different classes to speak and to work. It is a real Three People's Principles Policy.

"Regarding agrarian problems, on the one hand, we advocate a policy of recognising the payment of rents and interests as obligatory, so that the landlords can also have clothing and food. Regarding the relation between labour and capital, on the one hand, we are realising the policy of helping the workers so that the workers can have food and clothing; on the other hand, we are also carrying out the policy of industrial development which provides the capitalist with profit. All these are to unite people of all classes and stratas, so that they may unite their forces to resist Japanese aggression, and to reconstruct the nation. Such a policy is a policy of new democracy, not of one-party rule; it is neither the old-type democracy in the foreign countries, but as embodied in Dr. Sun Yat-sen's idea of the Three People's Principles. It is a policy which fits in with the Chinese national conditions.

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The special Border Region set up a constitution which makes interesting reading, especially because it has become the

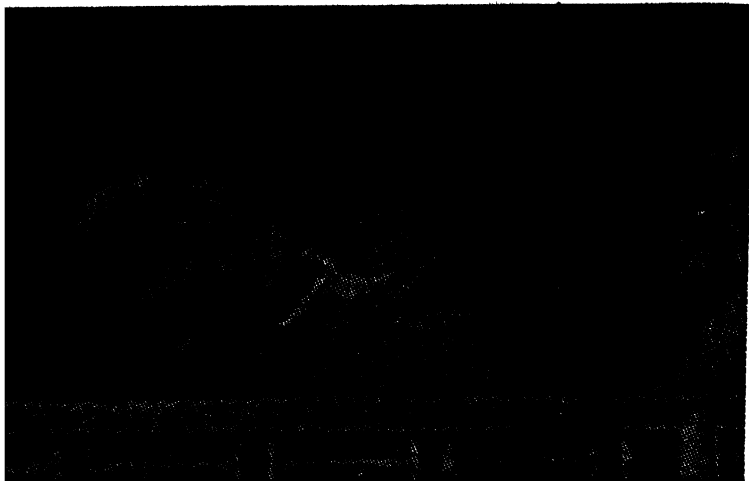


*Decorating Labour Heroes*

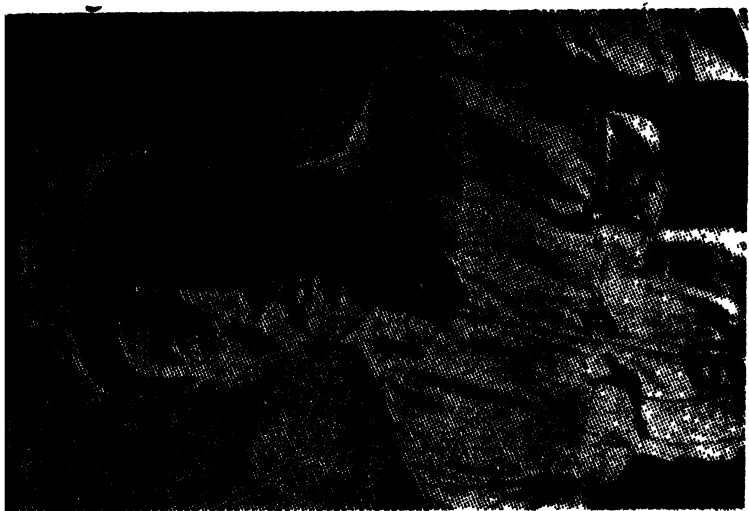


*Military Parade at Yenan*





*Mao Tse-Tung, Secretary of the Chinese*



*Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek in China*

model for the other Border Regions which have been established with the aid of the Eighth Route Army. The same "Three-three system" operates, for instance, in the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei Border Region.

The 'Regulations for Guaranteeing the Civil and Property Rights', approved by the People's Political Council of the Region read as follows :

**Article 1 :** The Regulations undertake to guarantee the civil and property rights of the people in the Border Region so that they may not be unlawfully usurped.

**Article 2 :** All the people in the Border Region, irrespective of the difference of their nations, classes, sexes, occupations and religions, are given the rights of freedom of speech, press, assembly, organisation, residence, transfer, belief; and are given equal democratic rights.

**Article 3 :** The right of private ownership of property, the right of freedom in its utilization within the limits of the law, and the right to derive benefits from it, of all anti-Japanese people in the Border Region, are safeguarded. ( Including land, houses, debentures and other properties. )

**Article 4 :** In districts where land had been distributed, the right of ownership should be guaranteed for all the peasants who had acquired land. In other districts where land had not been distributed, the right of ownership of land of the landlord, and the right of the creditors to collect debts, should be guaranteed.

**Article 5 :** Tenants and landlords, and creditors, should agree to pay and reduce rent and interest according to the law. Any contract of lease of land or debentures should be made with agreement on both sides.

**Article 6 :** The property and residence of any citizen in the Border Region should not be unlawfully confiscated, commandeered, occupied or searched by any government organ, army unit, or public organisation, unless for public benefit and with special ordinance.

**Article 7 :** With the exception of judicial and public safety organs which are entitled to carry out their legally designated functions, no organ, army unit or organisation has the right to arrest, search or punish any person except law-breakers. In case the interests of the people are injured, they have the

right to sue against any illegal act committed by any public functionary, in any forum.

**Article 8 :** The judiciary, or public safety organ, in the arrest of any person, should have sufficient evidence, and the case should be dealt with according to legal procedures.

**Article 9 :** In case any executive organ, army unit, organisation or individual other than the judiciary or public safety organ, arrests any law-breaker, in 24 hours he should be, along with the evidence, sent to the procuratorate or public organ to be disposed of according to legal procedure. The procuratorate or public organ that accepts the law-breaker should examine the case within 24 hours.

**Article 10 :** The arrested law-breaker should not be manhandled, beaten, or compelled to confess or plead guilty by force. In the trial, more importance is to be attached to evidence than to affidavits.

**Article 11 :** In case the judicial organ examines any civil or criminal case it should pronounce the verdict within 30 days beginning from the day of the arrival of the defendant, so that the latter may not suffer from legal delay, with a special exception when cases cannot be brought before the court for special reasons.

**Article 12 :** In case the judicial organ accepts a civil or criminal case, the defendant should not be detained, unless he refuses the summons, or does not act according to the verdict, or in some other special cases.

**Article 13 :** With the exception of times of martial law, in case any one other than those in Government service commits a crime, he should not be court-martialled. In case a soldier and civilian go to law, in a criminal case, after the examination the soldier is to be handed over to the military court, and the civilian to the judicial organ to be sentenced by the law. In case of civil suits, they are to be disposed of by the judicial organ.

**Article 14 :** When any people go to law, the court should not charge any fee.

**Article 15 :** The property of an arrested suspect should not be confiscated, changed or damaged, before the pronouncement of the sentence.

**Article 16 :** In lawsuits between citizens in its district, with the agreement of both sides, the government of the district

can mediate between them. In case they do not accept the mediation, they have the right freely to bring up their case in any Court, and they should not be debarred or punished by the district government.

**Article 17 :** In any case, except that of disregarding police regulations, organs of local government subsidiary to those of a district have only the right to proceed to investigation and mediation, but have no right of examination, detention and decision of cases.

**Article 18 :** In case any citizen in the Border Region does not accept the verdict of the procuratorate, he has the right according to law to appeal to the higher court.

**Article 19 :** A death sentence, after the period for appealing to higher court has elapsed without any appeal made, can be executed only with the ratification of the Government of the Border Region.

**Article 20 :** Any citizen in the Border Region, who has fled away after opposing the Government, but has come back and is willing to abide by the laws and regulations of the Border Region, should be pardoned and safeguarded by the law.

**Article 21 :** The right of interpretation of the Regulations belongs to the Border Region Government.

**Article 22 :** The Regulations have been approved in the People's Political Council of the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border Region and are made public by the Border Region Government to be observed.

\* \* \* \*

## CHAPTER II

### THE SPIRIT THAT 'CONTAMINATES'

What is the spirit that motivates the people in Yen-an? What new values have they forged in life? By what kind of people is Yen-an inhabited?

It is an interesting place, a world in itself.

People from all over China are here. The man from Szechwan is here, as much as the Manchurian and the Honanese. The men of Shantung, Shanghai and Canton find themselves round the same tea-table at the ubiquitous tea-shop. Here have come refugees from many provinces, reduced to pauperism. Here have come intellectuals in search of inspiration and an antidote to Kuomintang conservatism. Here have come the Balu Chun! Chia, the families of soldiers of the Eighth Route Army, to till the land which they received in Soviet days.

This is no 'concentration camp' of refugees and the down-trodden, the oppressed and the depressed. Here is a hard-working, simple-living, active population, cultivating even waste-lands, improvising co-operative factories, digging caves in hill-sides, arming itself with the one throbbing thought: "Down with the invader! We shall raise a new world based on democracy and equality! Down with all enemies of the people!"

A medley of dialects is spoken. All varieties of provincials have flowed into the same pot, Yen-an. There are many occasions when one Chinese does not and cannot understand another Chinese.

"In Szechwan the standard 'Mandarin' dialect often interchanges *h* and *f* sounds, and words that in the East start with *n*, in Szechwan begin with *l*. Even proper names get involved in this mix-up. Nanking, the refugee discovers, is no longer Nan-jing, as he pronounces the name, but Lan-jing; and the province of Hu-nan has become Fu-lan. Idiom differs, furthermore, and the emphasis on words of the third and fourth tones, upon which much of the sense of the language depends, is exactly interchanged. Even the first person pronoun differs; Szechwan people say *ngo*, and people from Peiping say *wo*." \*

And yet a uniformity of culture, through the common language of action, is being hammered out in Yenán as it was before in the Eighth Route Army. Yenán is a factory which is turning out goods which go to build a new China, the China of the future, where provincialism will be dead as a door-nail, where language and culture will not be common merely at the base, but also in day-to-day practice.

It is not merely a mixture of dialects and nations we come across in Yenán. The Chinese proverb says: "The tree desires repose, but the wind will not stop." Social revolution is sweeping Chinese society, shaking it to its very roots. The Japanese occupation of the sea-coast has driven sophisticated and unsophisticated alike into the interior. Workers, peasants, merchants, scholars, technicians and soldiers, with their families, have had to run precipitately for safety to the hills. What was once the bourgeois or the landlord, or even the petty-bourgeois intellectual class, has come to the interior mountains of the North-West, and finds itself no better than the proletariat. 'Proletarianisation' has been rapid and overwhelming. Here in Yenán an equalising process has been working at full pressure. In this new environment exploitation of man by man through inherited capital left by forefathers is now not possible. There is a levelling of incomes, a general simplifying of man's wants, because of the lack of smuggled trade with Japanese occupied territory and the generally backward nature of the country.

On the top of all this, Yenán harbours a race of intellectual Spartans, the Communists. Attracted by the great achievements of the Eighth Route Army, realising that here at Yenán there are many things to learn in military strategy, in progressive literature, in new cultural values, the best sons and daughters of China from the remotest corners have come hundreds of miles on foot, in motor trucks, on goods vans, to reach the Yenán Academies and Universities, and to learn to be perfect masters of the art of fighting the hated fascist invader and his ally at home.

What is Yenán like on the human side?

Describing memorial meetings in Yenán in honour of the late Dr. Bethune, a Canadian who gave his life in the service of the Red Cross with the Eighth Route Army, Prof. Stanton Lautenschlager says: "For three nights great mixed audiences of students, officials, workers and soldiers filled the auditorium.



All were dressed in simple grey garments. There was no distinction nor consciousness of class. All sat on narrow, backless benches, including the guests and the highest officials.....several rows of factory workers and students sat in front of us, and when we were asked to speak, Chu Teh and I had to climb over four rows of seats. The student chairman announced that the meeting would not begin until each bench held fourteen people. Everybody had to press together including ourselves, until all were seated."

And afterwards?

"The meeting broke up after midnight. All the audience, except a few who rode horses, walked home, some five and some even ten miles. We walked about four miles to our cave guest-house. There are no rickshaws and no chairs, except for sick people. No one uses man-power for riding in Yen-an.....Those who are not young in years, like Chu Teh and the venerable white-haired Secretary-General, are young in spirit; they also walked." \*

\* \* \* \*

".....Certain outstanding evils common in most parts of China had definitely been eliminated in the score of long-sovietised counties in north Shensi, and a crusade of propaganda was being conducted among inhabitants of newer areas to spread the same elementary reforms there. As an outstanding achievement, opium had been completely eliminated in north Shensi, and in fact I did not see any sign of poppies after I entered the Soviet districts. Official corruption was almost unheard of. Beggary and unemployment did seem to have been, as the Reds claimed, 'liquidated'. I did not see a beggar during all my travels in the Red areas. Foot-binding and infanticide were criminal offences, child-slavery and prostitution had disappeared, and polygamy and polyandry were prohibited." \*

And this heritage of the Soviets of Shensi was now commonly shared by the whole of the special district.

\* \* \* \*

Prof. Stanton Lautenschlager records: "The Communist .....must live cheaply. Like the early Christians, he must be prepared to sacrifice, and live for the cause he has undertaken to support. Yen-an has solved the problem of prostitution, not by law, but by economics. Communists do not have money to

spend on prostitutes, and girls can get good wages in the factories. Factory work also gives them the highest social status. Any bright girl can get an opportunity to go to school at government expense. When a girl can be a respected member of society and make a good living for herself and her family, she is not likely to fall back on prostitution." \*

\* \* \* \*

"My own letters of introduction I presented to the youthful 'Commissar for Foreign Affairs', Wu Liang-p'ing, who seemed to have a thoroughly diplomatic command of languages. In fluent English, he apologised for the 'poor accommodation' Yen-an could offer us, and invited me to dine with the other delegates and a group of officials at the Co-operative Restaurant. Here we were feasted in traditional Chinese style, with a wealth of dishes that seemed to belie the reports I had heard of Yen-an's scanty fare.....

" 'Do you often have meals like this ?' I wanted to know.

" 'Wu shook his head, and addressed me in a confidential whisper. 'No, of course not : this is only for our guests. While you are here, you will have the best food we can provide—that is the custom of Chinese hospitality. But we do not eat such food ourselves.'

" ..... Later, when I was more familiar with day-to-day life in Yen-an, I realised that this was strictly true. These Communists were no ascetics, and enjoyed as much as any Chinese ( which means, rather more than most people ) good food whenever they could get it. But the resources of Shenpei were severely restricted, and 'commons' in Yen-an was unleavened Chinese bread or millet, with cabbage, and perhaps an occasional meat dish thrown in. This was the standard ration for all, government officials included, unless there was good reason for a banquet. " \* \* \*

James Bertram records a public meeting, 'the opening of term and graduation day' at the Military Academy in Yen-an, at which Mao Tse-tung was the chief speaker.

" Room was made for me on a wooden bench, and someone passed the inevitable tea in a cracked enamel mug. Beside me, a tall slightly stooping figure rose and extended a hand. I looked into shrewdly-puckered eyes under the brim of a faded blue cloth cap. 'Chairman Mao,' said Wu.... 'Sit down, won't

you?' Mao said in his thick, rather pleasant Hunan dialect, 'and have a cigarette.' He fished in the pockets of his unbuttoned cotton jacket, and produced a crumpled packet of 'Pirates',.....

"If one were to believe the Japanese commentator, Yen-an, the home of the 'Bolsheviks of Asia', is the source of contamination for most of China today. Yet I can only describe what I saw as a place where most people seemed to be working hard and contentedly, where nearly everybody seemed to be young, and where the most enthusiastic could find something to do to work off their enthusiasm. Life was plain and frugal enough, even by Chinese standards; but Yen-an seemed to me a good place to be in.....

"I could write enthusiastically about many things in Yen-an, critically about some others. I have tried not to disguise the material hardship and shortcomings of life in the special district; but it did seem to me that they were more than made up for by omnipresent qualities of enthusiasm and initiative that are only too rare in other parts of China. Perhaps I have exaggerated the care-free atmosphere of the place, though that would be difficult. But one episode may suffice to show another side of the picture.....

"In the open space behind the buildings a crowd of perhaps two thousand blue-uniformed figures had gathered around a platform. 'What is it?' I asked, 'a mass meeting?' 'No,' said my companion..... 'mass trial.' He told me the story....A week or so before, the river beside the university had been the scene of tragedy. A young girl student who had recently come to Shenpei had been...something of a coquette. She was pretty, and had before long a number of suitors. The most persistent of these had been a graduate of the Military Academy, a thirty-year-old regimental commander who was a 'veteran' of the Red Army, with ten years' fighting service, and an exemplary revolutionary record. For some months the affair had run a stormy course. The officer had repeatedly asked the student to marry him; but the girl.....remained fancy free.....One night, he had called for her, and they had gone out together. Next morning, her body was found beside the river. It was a *crime passionnel*, if ever there was one.....The young colonel was immediately suspected. At first he denied any knowledge of the incident, inventing an alibi which was easily disproved.....When

he was arrested, he broke down and confessed that there had been a quarrel. He had demanded a definite answer from the girl: yes or no. She would not give it, and in a rage, he had shot her.....

"What interested me was the Shenpei method of dealing with the case. The offender was held under arrest, and the students of the Academy and of the University were given a day off to study every detail of the affair. Then—on the afternoon we looked down on the scene from the hills—the case was tried by the fellow-students of the dead girl and her lover..... The university group and some who had been the girl's closest friends, argued that she too had been to blame, urged the revolutionary record of the young colonel in favour of a light sentence. On the whole, the Red Academy group demanded a death penalty. The man had been a Communist, his responsibility was all the greater. Elected advocates spoke on both sides. What finally settled it was the man's first denial of the crime. If he had made a frank confession, it seems that he might have got off, perhaps with nothing more than a warning or demotion. But he had been guilty of disloyalty. It was put to the vote, and the mass vote was decisive. Sentence was formally passed by the judges of the High Court; and an hour or so after we had crossed those hills, the young Commander had been shot.....

"'Face, Fate and Favour'—that golden Chinese trinity which had been no less celebrated in many quarters under the Republic than under the Empire—was pretty firmly dis-established in Yen-an. If they had had nothing else to their credit, the Chinese Communists might count this alone to be no minor revolution." \*

\* \* \* \*

Edgar Snow, when on his way to Yen-an, met a young girl, the daughter of a Hunanese merchant. She had run away from her comfortable home to enlist with the New Fourth Army. She had spent a year with the Army, and was now going to the Nu Ta, the Women's University at Yen-an.

"A pretty child, smiling and cheerful, but tough as leather, she was quite able to take care of herself, and boasted a medal in marksmanship won with the New Fourth."

And again,

"In one city, the Commissioner of Education came to me like a conspirator, wanting me to 'introduce' his son, so that he

could enter the Yen-an Political and Military Academy. In Hongkong, a prosperous banker astonished me by making the same request. Looking at the comfort which surrounded his offspring, I said: 'Your son would have to sleep on a mud *k'ang* up there and grow his own food, and wash his own clothes.' 'I know that', he replied, 'but if he stays where he is, he will sooner or later have to wash the Japanese!' \*

Another sidelight—

"One day there was an argument about what was 'bitter'. One man said it was 'to have nothing to eat but corn.' Another said that the worst single diet was potatoes. Many Chinese, especially southerners, regard neither corn nor potatoes as fit for human consumption. 'But grass is still worse', said a third, 'unless there are grass-hoppers in it.' 'No grass, no grass-hoppers, only rats—that's all we had once', broke in the Hunanese with his sly grin (he was a veteran of the southern Soviets and the Red Army). 'Now that's real bitterness', everyone agreed..." \*\*

It is men with such experiences that Yen-an's army is full of. They are mostly peasants and workers of the provinces through which the Long March went, or where Soviets were established awhile and then moved on.

\* \* \* \*

Yen-an, even today, receives regular homage from Japanese bombers. Living conditions are simplicity itself. Mao Tse-tung, the most beloved leader of the Communists, himself sets the standard. Edgar Snow records a visit to the cave of Mao and his wife.

"The floor was lined with bricks and there were some touches of feminine decoration added by Madame Mao. But here signs of affluence ended. I discovered that Mao still owned only a couple of uniforms and a single padded coat. He had no personal wealth at all...No longer on a starvation diet, he had put on some weight; his hair was clipped short; he was dressed as always in the uniform of an ordinary soldier. He was still the plain man of the people, the queer mixture of peasant and intellectual...". \*\*\*

Yen-an lives an intellectual life quite different from what one comes across in Chungking or the rest of China. Nym Wales has written: "In Yen-an the Chinese Communists realised the communal life dreamed of by the primitive Utopian socialists of the Owen-Fourier era."

As leaders of Yen-an society, the Communists, by their mode of life, are setting the standard for the rest of the population to follow.

The highest government and military officials receive not more than 5 dollars a month as salary. Teachers in the University receive 3 dollars, while those in the schools get 2 dollars a month. Workers in factories get as much as 30 dollars a month. Generally a Communist worker gets less than a non-Communist worker. An ordinary worker lives better and has a bigger wardrobe than the highest official in the government.

Everywhere, in every walk of life, the Communists set an example of thrift, simple living, puritanical habits, a life wedded to service and sacrifice, of devotion to the cause, of utmost discipline and unquestioned loyalty to the Party.

Lu Hsun has rightly said: "The road to Yen-an is for China's youth the road to life."

\*                      \*                      \*

How does this compare with the past ?

Let us turn for a second to the picture that is now effaced more or less from Shenpei as a whole, thanks to the Communists.

"My experiences on the road have shown me the depths of ignorance of the common people of China. They do not know the most common methods of protecting themselves against disease.....At one village I wanted to buy some dry bread-cakes. But a swarm of flies were settled on the bread. The storekeeper came and *shooed* them away. I saw that flies had been caught in the dough and cooked with it. I explained that I did not want bread on which flies had settled. He laughed in hilarious amusement at me, then turned and called a number of people from the back of the shop. He told them that I would not buy his bread because flies had been on it! They all laughed. I again felt that I was in the middle ages..... In Yen-an where merchants were forced to cover food with mosquito nets, the Red soldiers patrolled the streets to enforce the public health measures. The people there have learned much, but not elsewhere.....

"There were times when we travelled for a whole day and saw not one cultivated terrace. The rains had washed many of them away and grass had grown over them. They had not been used for years. The country was desolate, without popu-

lation. Now and then we came to a tiny village with a few houses and a few ragged peasants. I recalled the terrible famine of 1928-29 that carried off nine million people in the North-West, many of them from this region (i.e., before the Communists came to the North-West).....But it is not this alone. This whole region has been the scene of Mohamedan uprisings and invasions. For decades, also, Chinese war-lords have bled this country white, taking crops, animals and chickens, while officials have levied taxes that stripped the people of their last grains of millet.....Soldiers have overrun the country leaving syphilis in their wake, so that children cannot even be brought to life. There are places here in the North-West where you can find no child under ten years of age. This problem is one of the most serious facing the new administration in the special area in the North-West, formerly the Soviet area and now recognised under the Central Government. The hospitals are busy treating men and women for this old disease, and the fight to prevent any syphilis from spreading to the Eighth Route Army is a big one. No volunteer with syphilis can enter the army. Men who have it must be carefully treated and kept in units apart from the others. And the army remains clean. But since it is largely an army of sexual ascetics, there is little or no chance of the disease spreading. Any violation of women is one of the most serious offences in the rules of conduct of the army and is heavily punished.....

"About me I see the people with a few rags, dirty and patched beyond description, to cover them. Our own men (Eighth Route Army) live on dry bread and water, with occasionally a few vegetables. They lie down to sleep at night with often no covering at all, with a piece of cotton cloth between them and the earth. They have absolutely nothing beyond what they carry on their bodies. They do not even know the feeling or meaning of a full stomach....."

"At one place we asked a very old peasant for hot water. He could not understand a word we said. Down the hill-side came two younger men, apparently his sons. They were short, squat men with long hair about their faces. They were bent double under great stacks of wood. From beneath their loads they lifted their dark faces, grinning at us. They made me think of all I had read and heard of the peasant serfs of the middleages in Europe. So the European serfs must have looked. These men

are so isolated that they speak only their own dialect. I suppose the number of their words does not reach a hundred. Their clothing is a few rags, literally rags; their bed is a mud *k'ang*; their food is such as animals could not live on....." \*

This is Agnes Smedley recording impressions in her diary of September 1937, when travelling with Eighth Route Army contingents from Yen-an to Sian. But 1937 is very far removed from 1943. The face of the North-West has changed out of all recognition since then.



### CHAPTER III

#### "SAN MIN CHU I" IN PRACTICE

The Three People's Principles—San Min Chu I—first propounded by Dr. Sun Yat-sen, are a slogan by which every Chinese school-boy swears, whether he be a student in the Communist-dominated special Border Region or in Kuomintang 'Free' China.

It is the specific claim of the Communist Party that it is the first, and still very nearly the only party in China, which has earnestly implemented the slogan in all its ramifications.

A first-hand observer comments:—

"The first fact that strikes an American visitor in China is that far from approaching Communism, China is just beginning to go democratic. The second fact is that the Communists are the loudest cheerers for every democratic gain.....The third noticeable fact is that the Communists have as yet only the shadow of a share in the Central Government, but that in any districts where they gain influence or control, they make that district especially democratic and also especially loyal to the Central Government...During the ten years of civil war the Communists.....urged resistance to Japan — 'People's Nationalism'—while the government submitted to loss of province after province. They demanded free speech and the right to organise—'People's Democracy'—in the years when these rights were denied. They proclaimed 'People's Livelihood' in terms of lower rents and taxes, farm credits, higher wages and social insurance for workers, while the banker-dominated government saw it in terms of unification by force, stabilised currency and more roads. The Communists can claim with some justice that the firmer resistance to Japan and the growing democracy fulfil the programme they have long demanded.....The 'Ten Principles' which contain this programme for immediate government policy are as follows :

- (1) Resist Japan; recover all lost territory; confiscate all Japanese property in China and rise for national defence.
- (2) Confiscate property of traitors and use it for refugees.

(3) Improve people's livelihood; prevent floods and famines.

(4) Remove unnecessary and exorbitant taxes; reorganise the finances of the country; develop industry and trade.

(5) Increase wages and improve living conditions of workers, peasants and students.

(6) Carry out universal, free and compulsory education

(7) Give work to the unemployed.

(8) Carry out democratic principles, and release political prisoners except traitors.

(9) Equality of all races living in China, and defence of Chinese people living abroad.

(10) Unity with all opponents of Japanese imperialism, the common people of Korea, Formosa; co-operate with all nations that sympathise with China; friendship with all nations that remain neutral.....

"The Communists hold that the more rapidly the government organises and arms the common people, and gives them education and the prospect of a better life, the more swiftly will China win the war. These demands arouse a certain amount of opposition from some elements in the Kuomintang chiefly from those who fear that their own popularity will not survive the widening Chinese Democracy". \*

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A 'Programme of Administration' of twentyone points was approved by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in Shenpei on May Day, 1941.

"On the occasion of the election of the Second People's Political Council of the Border Region, the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border Region Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party, for the sake of further strengthening the Border Region, further developing anti-Japanese constructive work in the political, economic and cultural field, thus achieving the aim of carrying out persistently the protracted war of resistance and promoting the welfare of the people, has submitted to the two million people of the Border Region the following plan of administration, which is based upon the Three People's Principles and the testament of Dr. Sun Yet-sen and the anti-Japanese national front principles the Chinese

**Communist Party.** If Communists are elected to the administration they will resolutely carry out this programme.

1) To unite all social strata, all anti-Japanese parties or groups in the Border Region, and to develop fully their manpower, material and financial resources and intellectual power in the fight for the defence of the Border Region of north-west China, and of the whole of China, in order to drive out the Japanese imperialists.

2) To persist in unity with the friendly parties, the friendly armies and all people outside the Border Region, and to oppose capitulatory and retrogressive tendencies.

3) To enhance the fighting capacity of the armed forces of the Border Region, ensure their material provisions, improve the recruiting system and the mobilisation system of the other military services, further strengthen the close solidarity between the army and the people, and at the same time to strengthen the organisation and training of the self-defence corps and the Youth Vanguard, and perfect their leading organs.

4) To improve further the preferential treatment to the dependants of anti-Japanese soldiers, and to carry out thoroughly the regulations as to the giving of preferential treatment to the dependants of the anti-Japanese soldiers, so as to ensure to dependants of men in the Eighth Route Army and all friendly armies, residing in the Border Region, material security and moral consolation.

5) Our Party is willing to form an election bloc with all political parties and groups and all public organisations, and establish definitely the practice that Communists should occupy only one-third of the list of candidates nominated, so as to enable all parties and groups and non-party elements to participate in the activities of the people's representative organs and in the direction of the Border Region Administration. In case of a Communist being elected as the head of a certain administrative institution, he should guarantee that two-thirds of his staff will consist of non-Communists. The Communists should co-operate in a democratic manner with these non-Communists and refrain from disregarding their opinion, dominating over them and monopolising everything.

6) To safeguard the civil rights, political rights, property rights and rights of freedom of speech, press, assembly, organi-

sation, belief and residence, of all anti-Jap people, including landlords, capitalists, peasants, workers, etc. With the exception of judicial and public safety institutions which are entitled to carry out their legally designated functions, any other institution, army unit or organisation has no right to arrest, examine or punish any person, whereas the people have the right to bring up a charge against any illegal act committed by any public functionary.

7) To improve the judicial system, to abolish resolutely the torture of prisoners and to attach more importance to evidence than to affidavits. With regard to traitors, except those found to be irreclaimable, a policy of leniency is to be adopted towards them irrespective of their past history: efforts are to be made to instruct and convert them and then provide them with a way out for their political life and livelihood. They should not be manhandled and coerced to give themselves up, or to write statements of repentance. With regard to elements such as renegades or anti-communists who plot wrecking activities in the Border Region, they will be treated in a similar way.

8) To enforce strictly the principle of clean and honest government, to punish severely any dishonest functionary. If a member of the Communist Party should violate the laws he is to be subjected to a more severe penalty. At the same time the salary system must be based on the principles of honesty and frugality; the necessary material needs of all functionaries and their dependants should be satisfied and an adequate cultural and recreative life must be guaranteed to them.

9) To develop agricultural production, to arouse the enthusiasm of the masses during the spring sowing and autumn harvesting, to help poor peasants to overcome their difficulties in securing ploughing cattle, farm implements, fertilizers and seeds. This year a further six hundred thousand *mow* of arable land will be tilled, thus increasing the supply of food crops by four hundred thousand *piculs*. Migration of people to the Border Region is to be encouraged.

10) In districts where land has been distributed, the right of private ownership of land should be guaranteed to all peasants who have acquired land. In other districts where land has not been distributed (such as in Suiteh, Fuhsien and

Chinyang), the right of ownership of land should be guaranteed to the landlords, and the right to recover debt to the creditors. But the rate of rent and interest must be reduced; the tenants should pay a certain amount of rent to the landlords and debtors should pay a certain amount of interest to the creditors. Government should regulate reasonably the relationship between landlords and tenants and between creditors and debtors.

11) To develop industrial production and trade, encourage private enterprises, protect private property, welcome investments from outside and abroad, to foster free trade and oppose monopoly and control; at the same time to develop the co-operative undertakings of the people, and to promote the development of handicraft industry.

12) To regulate the relationship between employer and employee, put into practice a ten-hour working day, increase labour productivity, and adequately improve the livelihood of the workers.

13) To establish a rational taxation system. With the exception of the poorest section of the people which should be exempted from taxation, a progressive tax system—a system in which the rate of taxation varies in accordance with the amount of property or income of the tax-payer—should be enforced, so that the expenses of the anti-Japanese war are borne by the great majority of the population. At the same time financial institutions are to be improved, financial relations stabilised, *fabi* (legal tender) protected, the notes issued by the Border Region Bank strengthened, so as to facilitate the development of healthy economy and prosperous finance.

14) To continue the policy of elimination of illiteracy, spread the teaching of Chinese in Roman script among the masses, perfect a regular educational system, put into practice universal public education, improve the livelihood of the primary school teachers, provide supplementary education for adults, strengthen the education of cadres, spread the circulation of popular books and periodicals, encourage free study, respect the intellectuals, promote the movement for scientific knowledge and literature, welcome scientists and artists, protect refugee students and unemployed young people, give democratic and self-governing rights to the students in the schools, and organise a daily two-hour study system for functionaries.

15) To broaden the health administration, improve medical facilities, welcome medical personnel, so as to mitigate the suffering of the people from epidemics. At the same time to give relief to refugees migrating into the Border Region.

16) In accordance with the principle of equality between man and woman, to enhance the social standing of woman politically, economically and culturally, fully develop the active initiative of woman in economic life, protect working women, pregnant women and children, and insist on the voluntary monogamous marriage system.

17) In accordance with the principle of equality between nations, to ensure that Mongolians and Mohammedans enjoy political, economic and cultural equality with Chinese people, establish autonomous areas for the Mongolian and Mohammedan nations, and respect their religious faiths, customs and habits.

18) To encourage overseas Chinese to come to the Border Region to study, participate in anti-Japanese work, or build up industries.

19) To provide vagrants with opportunity to work on farms, secure jobs and receive education. To correct the bad habits of functionaries and people of other professions in discriminating against vagrants. To carry out the policy of winning over, and educating *hweimen* organisations ( mass organisations with superstitious and semi-feudal orientations ).

20) To carry out without exception a policy of leniency towards the officers and rank and file of the Japanese and puppet armies who are taken prisoner in battle, regardless of the particular circumstances. To accommodate and extend hospitality to any of them who desire to participate in our war of resistance, and to release those who do not wish to remain. Without exception they should not be killed, tortured, humiliated, coerced to submit themselves or to make statements of repentance. Similar lenient treatment to be adopted without exception towards those, who, after being released, join the enemy and are taken prisoner by our army repeatedly, regardless of how many times they have been released or captured. Similar treatment to be adopted towards the members of any armed forces within the country who are taken prisoner during attacks against the Eighth Route Army or any other anti-Japanese Army.

21 ) To permit foreigners to come to the Border Region for touring, participating in anti-Japanese work, or engaging in industrial, cultural and missionary activities, under the condition of respecting China's sovereignty and observing the decrees of the Government. Every possible protection be given by the Border Region Government to those foreigners who are persecuted by foreign governments on account of their revolutionary activities, and forced to come to the Border Region for refuge." \*

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Comrade Kao Kang spoke in the People's Political Council of the special Border Region on November 15, 1941, in favour of the adoption of the programme by the Region Government and the Council.

"Members of the People's Political Council,

"As delegate of the North-west Bureau of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party to this session of the People's Political Council, I propose that you adopt this 21-point programme published on May Day of this year as the administrative programme of the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border Region.....Here I...speak on the following important questions raised by men of various circles since the publication of the programme.

"First of all I should like to explain why we drafted this programme. And what is its fundamental spirit? Its fundamental spirit may be summed up simply in a few words: 'unity, resistance, war, and liberation of China.' Surveying the Chinese history of recent decades, we learn the lesson that when our country is in danger and hardship, if all parties, groups, classes, strata, nations of the country are consolidated by unity, China survives; otherwise division brings destruction... The benefits of unity and the harm of splitting are clear as daylight. Therefore, in the first article of the programme we argue that only unity can render us victory over Japanese Imperialism. This is the first point.

"Secondly, this programme is outlined by our Party as a summary of its 20 years militant experience of struggling for the revolution. The major part of our country up to today is still in a semi-feudal and semi colonial state. In such a country, big landlords and bourgeois are few, and the proletariat consti-

tates only a few millions. But China has a population of 450,000,000. The overwhelming majority are peasants, and middle or petty bourgeois. As our Party Leader Comrade Mao Tse-tung has pointed out, Chinese society is a society with two small extremities and a big middle portion. The present stage of Chinese revolution is neither a socialist revolution of the proletariat nor a dictatorship of a certain class or party; its task is to carry out real democracy,—everyone taking part in wiping out the Japanese invaders, everyone taking part in governing the country. In the meanwhile, owing to the fact that China has suffered long periods of invasions, interferences and rule of the imperialists, owing to China's political, economic and cultural backwardness, revolution in China is bound to be protracted. Japanese imperialism cannot be wiped out in a day or two. It is precisely for these reasons that it is necessary that the Chinese people should persist in a long period unity in order to achieve their tasks. This is the conclusion drawn by the Chinese Communist Party from their 20-years' experience. If anyone acts contrary to this conclusion, nothing can be achieved. We Communists would insist on this orientation—no debarment, no obstacle could move us in the least.

"Some say that the programme is good, but it is only good for propaganda. I may solemnly announce here on behalf of the North-west Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party that we Communists will not only propagate this programme, but what is more important, we will resolutely carry it out. We Communists have always been opposed to those whose words are different from their deeds, or whose deeds differ from their words.

"The second question is, how can we guarantee the fulfilment of the administrative programme? It seems to me that for guaranteeing the fulfilment of the programme the 'three-thirds system' in the government should first of all be safeguarded. It is universally acknowledged that the focal point of all problems regarding practical politics is the problem of power. In order to carry out unity for resistance, and genuinely put in force this administrative programme, the 'three-thirds system' in the government must be put into practice, the masses must take part in administrative work, and 'one-man-ism,' absolute control and monopoly should be opposed. The 'three-thirds system' holds that in the government the Communists should constitute one-third of the total member-



ship, and people of other affiliations and no affiliation should be two-thirds. It is very apparent that the adoption of such a policy by the Communist Party is not for show, but for sharing real power. China is a country covering a large area, ever so complicated, and having such a large population, but there are only 500,000 Communists. How can they monopolize all power? Men of ability are available in the country, and it is not good not to allow them to take part in practical administrative work. Communists will never prevent them. Anybody behaving in such a manner, anybody practising 'one-man-ism' and trying to control and monopolize everything,—he is not a real Communist.

"The 'three-thirds system' holds that in the government Communists should only constitute one-third of the total membership, and people of other affiliations and no affiliation, two-thirds. Is it decreed so in the law? No. Why? Because in case Communists are not fit for the jobs, the citizens need not elect even a single Communist. But what if the people elect more Communists? If the number of Communists elected exceeds the proportion, the Party will withdraw the surplus so that the people of other affiliations and no affiliation can occupy the position left vacant.....

"For guaranteeing the fulfilment of the programme, the People's Political Councils of various grades should also be guaranteed to be authoritative organs and not shows for entertaining guests. They are organs higher than the executive and partake of the rights of election, recall, initiative and referendum. If a member of the People's Political Council discover unworthy behaviour in a functionary in a certain district or *hsien*, who gives commands autocratically in an undemocratic manner, tries to control and monopolise everything with favouritism, the Council of the district is empowered to recall him. Besides this, the Council is also empowered to examine and supervise the administration, to see whether all the decisions of the Council have been carried out, how far they have been put into execution. All decisions of the Council must be fully acted upon. That is clear.

"Are the officials of the various grades, whether Communists, members of the Kuomintang, or people of other or no affiliation, faultless? It is true as members of the Council revealed in the debate of yesterday, that there are many defects. Here I declare to you on behalf of the Communist Party that if a Communist functionary is not fit for the job or disregards

regulations, not only should he be impeached and recalled, not only should he be punished by higher administrative or judicial organs, but also he may be accused before the Communist Party Headquarters of different grades, or directly before the Northwest Bureau, or even in the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. And he will be punished according to the rules and discipline of the Party. The programme is projected by the Communists, and if Communists do not observe it, who will observe it? Those members of the Communist Party who covet bribes, are corrupt, are unfit for their jobs or guilty of favouritism, should be subjected to doubly severe punishment under both Party rules and judicial laws.....

"We hope that people of the various anti-Japanese parties and strata will criticise us, will help our members to cultivate good habits and will point out all our mistakes. Only after open-hearted co-operation, a struggle for the same cause, a mutual check-up, can the programme be fully put in force.

"Several practical problems await solution :

(i) Land. What shall we do with the undistributed land? Our Party advocates that undistributed land should belong to the landowner. Though rent should be paid, the rate should be reduced. As for the lands distributed long ago, there should be no change. These are measures beneficial to both sides.

(ii) Tax. It is no good laying heavy burdens on the former kulaks. We advocate that with the exception of very few poor people, 80% of the people should share the taxation, the rich ones to contribute more than the poor, so as to balance the taxes. If favouritism and injustice appear, people should disclose them and correct them.

(iii) Another question is the treatment of non-Communists who work in the administrative organs. With an allowance of 3-5 dollars per month, as in the case of the Communists, how can one support one's family? Can one go back home on leave or have leisure to make friends when one works in the government organs? We advocate a salary system in order to guarantee the employee and his family a decent life. As to freedom of private life, if it does not affect work, it should not be interfered with.

"In all these, the fundamental stand of the Communists is clear—they endeavour to unite the forces of the whole nation in

order to beat down Japanese imperialism. Every other question is subordinate to the benefits to be drawn from unity. The task of the whole programme is to strengthen unity. I hope it will be approved by you and adopted as the aim of the government as well as of all the people here in the Border Region." \*

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How does democracy function in Yen-an? How is the 'programme' carried out in practice?

The Village Councils are directly elected, the elections being held on the basis of universal adult franchise. These Village Councils, in their turn, elect delegates to the County Council. The ratio differs with the size of the region involved. Thus, in the *hsiang* (village), one delegate is elected from approximately every twenty voters; in the *Ch'u* (district) one from every thirty; in a *hsien* (shire), one from every seven hundred; and on an average, a delegate to the Council of the whole Border Region represents 5,000 inhabitants.

Each Council elects its own executive. The Magistrate who functions in the *hsien* is directly elected, and presides over the *hsien* executive. The Border Region Council elects its executive, which in turn forms the Government.

The elections for the *Ch'u* council are held every six months, for the *hsien* and Border Region Councils every year.

The first election under the Border Region Constitution took place in October and November 1937. The Soviets immediately handed over power to the newly elected Councils, and disappeared from the political arena.

Out of a population of twenty lakhs, "from eighty to ninety per cent of the population participated in the elections. Even 'small-feet' (women with bound feet) and old ladies felt that they must take part." The Report of the First Executive Council records that six per cent of the total poll was the landlord-merchant vote. And yet critics were not wanting who declared that "the law was nominal and a deceptive mask," and that "the so-called democratic system was in reality a worker-peasant dictatorship".

Every citizen over twenty years of age, irrespective of sex, party, class, occupation, property, religion or nationality, is a voter and a potential candidate. The vote itself is universal,

direct, equal and on the non-nominating principle. Forty thousand delegates is the total number of representatives chosen for the People's Political Councils of different grades from the *Asien* to the Central Border Government. Political awakening has reached a stage when politics becomes a part of the daily life of every man in the village tea shop.

"The district longest under Communist control is the 'Special Border District' in Northern Shensi, an arid, hilly, poverty-stricken region lying close under the great deserts of southern Mongolia in part of the 'famine belt'. Though relatively large in area—some 650 by 300 miles—it supports only about a million and a half population (in 1937) on a diet of corn, millet and potatoes, varied with a very scanty amount of wheat and mutton.....On the Communists' own initiative, democratic local elections were held at the end of 1937 in which the formerly disfranchised landlords and trading classes were allowed to vote together with the peasants. These were the first elections by full manhood suffrage ever to be held anywhere in China in all her history. Not only men but women were included. Lively campaigns were held before the elections. Secret ballots were provided, voters who could not read being helped by students to mark their ballots. In most of the villages seventy per cent of the people took part; those districts where only half of the people turned out were considered backward. Most of the localities, but not all of them, returned the Communists to office.

"The promulgation of laws and regulations of the government, the plans and directives of the administration, and the budget, are first approved by the People's Political Council..... The Council has not only the right to choose the most capable and honest men for the government organs, but has also the right to impeach and recall those unsuitable for their jobs. Thus as decreed in the testament of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the people have the rights of election, recall, initiative and referendum." \*

A close watch is kept by the members of the Councils on those of their members who are vested with executive authority. A method of continuous and regular reporting and check-up has been evolved. Irresponsible or indifferent functionaries are thrown out without mercy. The one criterion is to be honest and thoroughly active at your job. The slightest sign of graft or vacillation regarding the welfare of the people or the war of

resistance brings down censure from the Councils. The functionaries are not merely elected by the people and of the people, but close watch is kept to see that they function for the people.

Once again, the 'three-thirds system' is strictly observed. At the time of the election of a Resident Committee for the second People's Political Council of 1941, sixteen delegates were to be chosen. Accordingly the number of Communists among them was not to exceed six. But many more Communists had been proposed by the electors than the required number. The Communist Party immediately issued orders to Comrade Wang Wei-chou and others to withdraw their candidatures, which they did. After the elections it was found that there was yet an extra Communist in the list of successful candidates. Comrade Hsu Teh-li withdrew, and made way for a non-Communist, Mr. Pen Wen-huan.

Comrade Lin Pai-chu, a colleague of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and one of the founders of the original Kuomintang, was elected President. A non-Communist, Mr. Li Ting-min, was elected Vice-President.

Co-operation with non-Party people is not a slogan for window-dressing purposes. It is strictly abided by, and especially where Communist influence and prestige is so overwhelming that all seats would be captured by them, if a free vote were permitted.

Direct and close co-operation between the people and the government is maintained at every step of the administration. "It was a truism throughout China that nowhere had mobilisation of fighting power and labour power been so effective as in the first Border Region."

In 1941, for the second session of the People's Political Council, Dr. Basu, one of the doctors of the China Medical Mission, sent by the Indian National Congress to China, was elected as member on behalf of the Anti-Fascist League of Oriental Nations, the first Indian to sit in a duly elected 'Parliament' of China. The Communists of Shenpei supported him for the seat.

What are the 'transmission belts' employed for this mobilisation?

Under the *hsiang* government, various self-governing committees are appointed, and all persons willing to be active

in a particular government department are given a chance to take a hand at administration through these committees. Full scope is given for initiative. The Finance Committee, for instance, helps not only in the collection of local revenues, but also in their disbursements.

Wu Keh-chien sums up the advantages of the system : "The merits are : (1) Government organs are able to approach the great populace and are welded into one piece with them. (2) The execution of government affairs is under the supervision and assistance of the local people. (3) This gives the populace the chance to practise and to take part in public service without having to break off from daily productive work. (4) At the same time, it also enables the government to reflect the views of the masses engaged in production regarding government affairs, viz., to make the policy of the government coincide with the demands of the populace." \*

The government is not something above and beyond the masses, sitting in the Olympian heights of Yenan wrapped up in its monopoly of wisdom, but is united with the people by as many chords as efficient decentralisation can permit.

The links between the people and the department of Defence are a good instance. The families of soldiers receive 'little courtesies' which make them the cynosure of many eyes in their villages. They have the right to buy at the co-operative shops at cost price. They are relieved of the burden of grain contribution to the National Salvation Fund. The local Cultivation Corps is always ready to help them in the fields. At the theatre and at meetings, they occupy seats of honour. Maimed soldiers, no more fit for active service, receive a parcel of land and a pension.

Knitting comforts for the troops is organised on a wide scale. Women of all ages put together a heap of one lakh gloves and woollen socks for their men-folk at the front in 1939 alone. Edgar Snow has quoted instances of how the Eighth Route Army is constantly in the thoughts of the people it defends : "One lass climbed every day high up into the mountains to gather fire-wood to sell for a few coppers. In another place, the poorest man in the village dug up his savings, a couple of hundred copper coins, and gave them to the cause. A coal peddler volunteered to work an hour or two overtime every day

to earn a few 'cash' for the boys at the front. School children saved their water-melon seeds.....to be distributed as comforts. ....In six rather poor *hsiens*, over 850 dollars were raised in one year for comforts for the soldiers and their families.....It is something new in the Chinese tradition. The idea that the civilian owes anything to his armed defenders, and especially to any 'useless fellow' who crawls back from the front with an arm or a leg missing, is quite recent, except among the Reds, who early recognised the importance of enforcing respect and honour for the revolutionary fighter." \*

Again, the legislative body is the executive body too. The organs that take the decisions are also in charge of putting them into practice. Thus discussions do not become mere academic affairs, as so often happens with legislatures even in 'civilised' Europe or America. There is no room for irresponsibility to develop, because the same men who influence the drafting of the legislation have to approach the masses with it and get them to co-operate in its execution. What they vote for, sitting in the legislature, the very next moment will have to be put into action by them. Words and deeds are not separate business for separate groups of people. Politics is not allowed to degenerate into a game of two opposing parties. Inefficiency and criticism for the sake of criticism are both avoided. This prevents the ulcerous growth which vitiates most governments in the world, the growth of the professional bureaucracy.

These innovations have also resulted in the abolition of all forms of corruption, such as made a byword of the magistrates and other functionaries of the Kuomintang and previous governments. The old Chinese saying: "The *hsien jang* (city magistrate) represents 10,000 abilities in the eyes of the magistrate himself." But this does not apply any more to the special Border Region. Frugal living is the hall-mark of a good administrator. As a son of the soil, in touch with the soil, he will not and cannot be a spendthrift at public expense. Every cent that is collected must go to support the anti-Japanese campaign or towards the production front behind the lines. A cold-blooded traitor alone would dare to profit at the cost of his country. And if he did, he would soon be spotted and eliminated.

"Embezzlement was not unknown, of course, but scamps who made money out of the toil of honest folk were not

honoured. Indeed, after exposure, several of them lost their heads as traitors, by popular request. Under such conditions, one could think of several distinguished gentry, who would not find life healthy in the ancient hills and the 'bandit lair' of upper Shensi." \*

Again, mass organisations like the Young Vanguard, the Self-Defence Armies, the Cultivation Corps, wield an influence on the day-to-day administration which it is not possible to gauge by merely reading the Regulations of the Border Region. Most youths, of eleven to seventeen years, in the villages and the cities are members of the Young Vanguard. They drill under the guidance of military commanders and are linked in a semi-official capacity to the fighting units. These are the potential soldiers; actual soldiers they can only become at the age of eighteen.

The Self-Defence Army mobilises all able-bodied men and women of the area. In Yen-an locality, out of a population of ten lakhs, nearly one fourth claims membership of one or the other of these two mass organisations.

Apart from these stable and permanent bodies, a particular *Yun-tung* claims its own apparatus. A *Yun-tung* is a campaign or a drive for a definite objective of a temporary character. For instance, when the army has attracted all the strong young men as soldiers, a shortage of hands at the autumn harvest or spring planting is a natural corollary. Then the *Yun-tung* is launched with all ceremony. Everybody answers the call: public officials, council members, teachers, students, merchants, labourers, soldiers not on active duty, and their families—in short, the whole population turns out voluntarily to lend a helping hand. These agricultural *Yun-tungs* are no doubt the worthy successors of the "Red Army Land Tillers" and the "Saturday Brigades" of the Soviet days.

And how are civil liberties safeguarded in practice? Are fundamental rights allowed to be exercised by anybody and everybody?

Property rights will be a good test, especially because the Border Government is suspect as the heir to the past Soviets. We find that private property is not abolished, but safeguarded. No unlawful confiscation is permitted. Property in land is not interfered with, but maintained intact as at the inauguration of the Border Region. Rents and interest due to landlords or



creditors by tenants and debtors are also given legal recognition, though usury is severely frowned upon. Private enterprise is encouraged, and helped in concrete ways. Only one progressive tax is levied, all other exactions being prohibited.

All anti-Japanese parties, groups and organisations have legal status. Freedom of speech, press, assembly, organisation, belief, travel, correspondence, literature and residence are allowed to be practised without the least hindrance.

Women have secured equality of status with men in the political, economic and social spheres of action.

But what are the guarantees that infringements of the above are not taking place ?

A three-fold shield is provided :

(1) The composition of the government is so arranged that all political parties, all classes of society and all nationalities, are permitted an active share of work, and shoulder responsibility for the administration.

(2) Not only do the laws and regulations make ample mention of rights and freedom—not only is there a guarantee on paper—but in actual practice, the administration is searching for fresh ways and means of improving their exercise. For example, for those who wish to exercise the freedom of organisation and press, the government provides facilities such as meeting-places, halls, stadiums and printing presses; for those who seek travel, the government gives assistance by solving their transport problems; for those who exercise the freedom of belief, the government prevents any intolerance by any section against any other — nor does it force people to swell the membership of the Communist Party. It encourages independent research and unhampered, untrammelled freedom of thought. The minority nations find that their old customs and traditions; as also religious beliefs, which they wish to maintain, are respected, and special schools, if desired, are set up to help their cultural development.

(3) An independent and upright judicial system has been organised. Any public functionary can be accused before the courts for violating any law or regulation of the Border Region.

Besides these judicial courts there are people's courts, which mediate in conflicts, if required.

All trials are public; none behind closed doors. Torture of prisoners is strictly prohibited. Even those found guilty of criminal conduct are given political education, and repeated chances are provided for them to make good by lending their services to the government for productive purposes. Only traitors, fifth columnists and bandits face severe punishment.

"Yenan has.....gone far to solve the problems of graft, corruption and dishonesty. The only foreigner I saw at Yenán, a Roman Catholic medical man, said to me in answer to my questions as to what he thought of Yenán: 'I am impressed with their great economic programme, with the sacrifices and sincerity of the officials, and with the central honesty of the whole thing. No official enriches himself at Yenán. In the hospital, and through all the medical work, the best is always given to the wounded. The officials and students always take the worst. That is why I stay at Yenán. 'But', I said, 'you are a Roman Catholic. They have taken all your church property. *Lu I* Arts College is in your cathedral.' 'Yes', he said, 'our priests ran away. The church had a great property and very few Christians. Perhaps *Lu I* is doing more good than the church did. Anyhow the property is big enough for both. I am sure if the priests came back, all that was really needed for their work would be gladly restored to them.' " \*

This is the testimony of Stanton Lautenschlager, a Westerner not in sympathy with Communists, sent to hold enquiry about their deeds on the spot.

Dr. B. K. Basu, of the Indian Medical Mission to China, in 'Reports from China' ( December 1941 ) describes his first-hand impressions of the Second Session of the People's Political Council of the Border Region :

" It was a chilly and cloudy day of late October with occasional drizzles. We happened to be in a restaurant in the New Market, sipping tea leisurely. Suddenly all the inmates rushed to the window, attracted by a loud continuous noise outside.

" A middle-aged peasant with a red cloth badge stuck to his cotton padded jacket was slowly passing by, and behind him a large group of people, men, women and children, probably his friends and admirers, were shouting in glee and beating the drums and gongs carried by them. They were sending off their representative to the People's Political Council of the Border

Region in a rural, simple fashion. This had been a very common sight for the last few days throughout the Border Region. The Second Session of the People's Political Council was going to be held in Yen-an very soon, and the representative members were flocking in from all directions accompanied by the same kind of tumultuous noises.

"In fact for the last few months the Border Region had been throbbing with excitement and great expectations. There were fiery election campaigns in villages, towns, *hsiens*, and different organisations and institutions. The construction work and the finishing touches of the big Assembly Hall at the South Gate of Yen-an, the first of its kind in the Border Region in novelty and magnificence, built for the purpose of council meetings, were being feverishly completed.

"On the warm afternoon of the 6th of November, 1941, the Second Session of the People's Political Council opened amidst great enthusiasm.

"The big Chinese National Flag waving with the breeze on the roof-top, the variegated flags presented by various organisations inscribed with democratic slogans hanging on the walls around the Hall, together with a big portrait of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and other leaders of the Chinese people, gave an appearance of dignity to the Session.

"There were 200 seats for the elected members of the Council and 30 for candidates in the central row, while the side row 'galleries' were packed with prominent visitors and Government functionaries. You have only to turn your head back and sideways to have a glimpse of the representative character of this Council. Among the members there were workers, peasants, landlords, merchants, writers, students, teachers, soldiers, doctors...different nationalities, e. g., Japanese, Korean, Indonesian, Indian, Mongolian, Mohammedan, etc., rubbing their elbows with one another. There were more than a score of women, and old men too, among the members. They were the real representatives of the two...million people of the Border Region.

"After the inaugural address and other preliminaries, such distinguished visitors as Mao Tse-tung, Commander-in-Chief Chu Teh, and a high Staff officer from Chungking, addressed the meeting. Comrade Mao said: 'Today the Communists have one aim, that is, to fight against Japanese Fascist aggressors and

establish a New China based on the Three People's Principles.....Our method is to cultivate one-third Party ratio in every branch of the government organisation.....The Border Region today is facing difficult and serious problems. We have in this Hall representatives from every section of the population. Everybody has the right to say whatever he likes, what opinion he has, and together to discuss and find out the best way to administer the Border Region...' Chu Teh said that our objective was anti-Japanesestruggle. "We have weaker armaments but nevertheless we have the greatest man-power on earth...450 million! In order to develop this tremendous dormant man-power into real strength, the people must have real democracy. With real democracy we can successfully resist the Japanese Fascists and ultimately defeat them."

"Some of the foreigners who had been elected members of the Council also spoke highly about the democracy and unity among the various strata of the population in the Border Region. They were very happy to find for the first time in the history of the East, that they were living under a democratic form of Government.

"After the first day's session, late in the evening, among the happy moonlit faces retiring from the Hall, one could hear the general remark—'how solemn and impressive it was!'

"The session lasted from 6th to 21st November, and in these 16 days' deliberations, very important steps have been taken towards attainment of wide democratic benefits for the people. Originally the programme was for ten days. But due to fear of air raids in the mornings, the sessions were held only in the afternoon and evening. It was only on cloudy days that the morning sessions could be held with impunity. In fact the enemy airplanes reconnoitred over Yen-an, but failed to locate the Assembly Hall, as it was well camouflaged.

"The members were all conscious of the momentous importance of this Council in the history of People's democracy. They sent greetings telegrams to the Communist Party, Kuomintang, other political parties of China, to the overseas Chinese students, and the youth, women, and writers of the great home-front, and to other nations of the East.

"Reports were read and laid on the table for open criticism by the Council members, about the work of the different branches of the government since the last meeting of the Council. In the eloquent general report on the work of the Government, President Lin Ba-chu dealt clearly and concisely with important achievements, difficulties confronted and overcome, during his tenure of office. Before the arrival of the 8th Route Army, the percentage of illiteracy in the North West was 99%; now it has been reduced to the figure of 80%. Since then, thousands of minor and primary schools, more than ten High Schools, a few technical institutes, have been established in the Border Region. The livelihood of the population has been improved immensely. The majority of the poor peasants have now been transformed into middle peasantry with enough lands and livestock to flourish. Thousands of refugee families have found their home and settled down happily in the Border Region. In the financial report by Nan Han-chan, it was pointed out that 48.1% of the gross annual revenue of the government is derived from sale of salt (there is a big dried up salt lake which supplies almost all the Northwest) to places outside the Border Region. Only 7.6% comes from taxation, while 35.44% is derived from state handicraft industry and agriculture. Among the various items of expenditure, 60% is taken up by the army; 12.66% goes to economic reconstruction and about 6% to education. One million dollars are set aside for medical and health work.

"General Siao Ching-kwang, reporting on the army said: During the last three years the Japanese raided the Border Region 40 times. All attacks were effectively repulsed, while the enemy left behind 430 killed and 6 captured; our losses were only 143. Before, the Northwest was infested with bandits. Within the last two years the 8th Route Army has liquidated them all, totalling some 46 big and small groups; 1,370 bandits were killed in the fighting and 820 were captured. Most of them have settled on land given by the government. For the last few years Chinese reactionary militarists, in order to stifle the progressive Border Region, have enforced rigorous blockade around it on the South, West and North. They frequently launch military attacks on the Border Region, while a large army is still deployed around the frontiers of the Border Region. The discontinuance of monetary help to the 8th Route Army by the Central Government, together with the blockade had created a very difficult economic situation.

"President Lin also dealt with the poor medical and health condition of the Border Region people, and thanked the scientists and medical men who, with their self-sacrificing spirit in coming here, are helping to eradicate the high infant mortality and venereal and other local diseases, and improving the general level of health among the population. Feverish construction of roads and bridges is going on, to improve the communication system of the Border Region within and without, while active encouragement is being given to the wide development of handicraft and home industry.

"During interpellation hours, many rational questions were raised by the Council members, which were satisfactorily answered by the department heads concerned.

"Then came the most important days of the session, occupied with discussions of resolutions and their adoption by the Council. There were some 300 resolutions put forward by members and others, relating to military, civic and economic affairs, education, public health, medical and scientific studies, democratic construction in various branches of administration, etc. For example, resolutions about the protection of the low-valued Border Region currency; efficiency with a minimum number of functionaries in every branch of government; direct progressive taxation; encouragement of the new written language (Romanised Chinese) and its equal legal status with the old Chinese characters; the betterment of livelihood of the workers, peasants and soldiers; the building of more hospitals, sanatoria and training centres for medical cadres, etc., were a few of the many important ones. The most momentous discussion was on the adoption of the Border Region Government Programme of 1st May, 1941, moved by the Communist Party of China (North-west area). This included everything in a nutshell for the establishing of a new China on the Three People's Principles.

"Finally, the elections to the various government departments were not less interesting. According to the formula of the one-third ratio, the Communist Party members would not occupy more than one third of the total seats. So many popular figures, beside Party members were elected to responsible posts. The most respected and cherished figure, white-haired, serene, Lin Pa-chu, was re-elected as President of the Government;

while the little 61-year old popular educator from Mitze hsien, Li Ting-min, a non-political non-party man, was elected as Vice-President. In the election of the standing Council too, the one-third ratio system was strictly observed.

"After a sitting of 16 continuous days—warm and sunny in the earlier part, snowy and windy in the later days—the session concluded on the evening of the 21st November. Severe cold and inclemencies of weather could not keep even the oldest members from attendance. They came as energetically as any young man, sat in the Hall beside the charcoal fire, frequently smoking the long narrow native pipe, and listened and participated in the deliberations. During these days of hard work, there were arrangements for relaxation in the form of official dinners, theatrical entertainments, cinemas, etc., every evening.

"During the closing ceremony, a 79-year-old peasant member ascended the rostrum and movingly said: 'I am such an old man, this is the first time I am witnessing and participating in such a democratic political Council. The Communist Party's efforts are for the country and the people...I am so happy ...I have often heard from people that the sacrifices of the peasants (in taxation and other things) are very big. But I have come to know that the government and other functionaries sacrifice and suffer more, leading a simple and bitter life...To fight against the Japanese aggressor we must sacrifice more. This we must explain to the peasants.....'

"With the historic Second Session of the People's Political Council of the Border Region over, the people received a practical education in the wide democratic system by putting into practice the new principles of democracy enunciated by Mao Tse-tung, though the newly elected government strengthened with new and vigorous blood. There was a lot of talk about democracy and unity; now let us see the democracy in action from bottom upwards in the Border Region.

"As an old veteran, Hsieh Chiao-tsai, said in his speech on democratic Construction in the Political Council: 'Everybody living in the Border Region above 18 years of age has the right to elect and be elected, irrespective of class, party leaning, sex, occupation, religious status. Only traitors and mental defectives are debarred from this right.'

"The village is the foundation of democracy. So it was necessary to have village folks sharing in political life, and

taking part directly in the units of state power. In our village government, there is a combination of both executive and legislative functions. The people has the direct power in these governments. In the *hsien* and central Border Region governments the division of executive, legislative and judicial renders it indirect; hence the necessity for the organisation of a People's Political Council with the power of supervision and direction of all the branches of government.

"Schools and other educational institutions, public functionaries and various associations, civil guards, anti-Japanese defence corps, the Army, and factories employing more than 100 men, have the right to send independent representatives into the various Councils. The national minorities, e. g., Mongolians, Mohammedans, foreigners living in the Border Region, etc., have the right of sending their own representatives to the Councils of villages, towns, *hsiens*, and to the Border Region People's Political Council. In their cases, a much smaller number of voters can elect one representative.

"Such are the means of fulfilling the task of democratic construction, and actually one is astounded to find the tremendous successes achieved in the Border Region, which might be considered the most backward part of China before. Now it is proud to be a model of democracy for all China, and even for other nations of Eastern Asia "

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Anna Louise Strong, again, writes : " An article in the Communist official organ amplifies their ( Communists' ) view of China's future democracy. ' Born in the process of victory, this democratic republic will be different from the old-fashioned democratic republics in Europe and America. But what we propose is absolutely not a Soviet or non-capitalist republic; it must and will be a new type of democratic republic. ' Democracy in China is itself a revolution; on this all parties agree. Steadily the war of liberation pushes China towards this revolutionary democracy, through the necessary act of arousing, organising, and arming the people to win the war. The process may be delayed by a hesitant, corrupt, or even treacherous general or official; every such delay is at the cost of Chinese lives. But the process itself does not halt; it moves forward. Governors who oppose it, like Wu Teh-ohan of Kwangtung, lose their capitals to the Japanese, and are removed by an indignant Central Government. Members of the Central Government who oppose it, like Wang Ching-wei, also eventually remove themselves or are removed. It is a slow and costly process. But out of this war against Japan, China begins to gain not only national independence but internal democracy. " \*

No wonder Owen Lattimore declares: "The 'unchanging' Chinese are going to win the war because after all they are changing, and in a progressive creative direction."

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## CHAPTER 17

### "PEOPLE'S LIVELIHOOD"

When the Communists first came to Yen-an, the North-West had been infested by bandits. One of the first tasks of the Red Army and the Soviets had been to clear the Region of all pestilential growths in society. The bandits were wiped out or converted. Then came the turn of the exploiters, whether in the form of landlords, money-lenders or traders. The agrarian revolution re-distributed the land among the tillers.

When the Border Region was established, the old land lords were permitted to return, and received back a portion of their land, the rest having been distributed among the landless agricultural labourers.

"Landlords were allowed to return and were given land for their personal use if they desired it, but not the whole of their former estates. The previous 'land-reform', which gave the soil to the actual tillers, had proved a chief factor in preventing or lessening famine." \*

But even under the new, post-Soviet dispensation, rent from land was not allowed to reach the old exorbitant rates. It was considerably scaled down, on an average at least twenty-five per cent.

The policy was clear. As Jan Pei-hsi told Anna Louise Strong: "In places where we have driven out the Japanese and are called upon to form local governments, we no longer do this by calling a meeting of poor farmers, and excluding the rich. We form local governments representing all classes. We do, however, demand that rents, taxes and interest rates be lowered, since otherwise the common people will not be able to endure the strain of the war. In cases where local conflicts have come to bloodshed, as when a landlord has killed a tenant and the latter's family has declared a blood feud against the landlord, we try to arbitrate by securing financial compensation from the landlord to the injured family. Chinese must not fight Chinese while we are all faced with a greater danger of slavery to Japan." \*\*

As regards taxation, 400 lbs. of grain per head for each member of the tenant's family must first be set aside. The tax

was never to exceed five per cent of the remainder. The landlord would receive his rent in grain, and pay a tax of seven per cent on what he received from his tenants, after deducting no more than 400 lbs. per member of his family. Some typical instances of improvement in the livelihood of the people may be cited. \*

Chang Sen-shiang lives in the Chang-sin-chuen village in the central district of Yen-an. He has four members in his family. Before the agrarian revolution, he was a shepherd and 'did odd jobs on a farm'. Occasionally he had 'nothing to eat, no clothing, not even one animal'. He had to pay a Militia Fee of two *piculs* of grain, amounting to four or five dollars, as also seven days' free labour every year to the old landlord. But the Soviets had changed all that. In 1932 he hired one labourer, in 1940 found him with two. He now ploughed 40 *shions* of land, collected 29 *piculs* of grain and paid only three *piculs* towards the national tax. In 1941, he ploughed an extra two *shions* of wheat-land, and hired yet another labourer and one shepherd. He owns one ox, one donkey, fifty-two sheep, two big pigs and eight small ones. He is the true type of the average peasant of the Border Region.

In Yen-an today seventy per cent of the total number of peasant families can be classed as 'middle-peasants'.

There were 115 families of poor peasants in the central district of Yen-an before the Soviets arrived; today there are only 61, mostly new arrivals of the last two years. The original poor peasants have all become 'middle-peasants', or even risen to kulak status.

An interesting illustration is afforded by Chang Pei-i, who lives in the Fourth *hsiang* of Yen-an.

During 1934, he had 1,500 *shions* of land, six oxen, two donkeys, one horse, a hundred and ten sheep, and 500 *piculs* as grain stock. He ploughed 40 *shions* of land, hired labourers to hoe as well as reap for him, collected twenty *piculs* of grain and seventy *piculs* as rent. He had to pay ninety *piculs* of grain to the government as tax, roughly worth 200 dollars.

During the revolution he fled to some city and became a grocer. In 1936 he came back to Yen-an. Under the Border Government he received back thirteen *shions* of his land. From his savings he bought two oxen and one donkey, and 'toiled in

the field'. When he collected the grain, it amounted to only five *piculs*. So the Government mobilised voluntary help for him lending him nine *piculs* of grain. By 1940, he had come to possess thirty *shions* of land collect twentyfour *piculs* of grain, seven *piculs* of buck-wheat, and pay six *piculs* as tax. By 1941, he owned two more donkeys, hired a labourer, supplemented his income to the tune of 300 dollars per month by carrying coal to the city.

One thing is clear. Before the agrarian revolution, the masses were poor, starving, leading an animal existence. Under the Soviets and the later Border Government, they have risen to human stature; they have enough to eat; their livelihood is a matter of the greatest concern to the State; they live in peace and safety; and every attempt is made to give them cultural as well as political values. The poor peasant has become a satisfied and relatively stable, prosperous peasant. The former landlords, too, find a new meaning in life, and lead a more purposeful existence than before.

Prosperity and development are the watchwords of the administration. Agricultural production has been considerably expanded. The Border Government organises planting, tilling and reaping campaigns. In places where the young men have gone to war, the whole population that is left behind joins the 'lend-a-hand' campaign. Nearly two lakh acres waste-land have been made available for tillage. Students, garrison soldiers, officials, merchants, even clerks and bankers, help in the mass drive for growing more food.

Edgar Snow has recounted how he called at the Border Government Bank in one morning, and found the door locked for the day. The whole staff had gone out into the fields round about to help with the harvest. In Yen-an, as in all North Shensi, famines and food scarcity are a matter of the past. The Border Region claims to have reached the mark of self sufficiency in food.

This is the basis of the peasant bulwark against Japanese aggression, which the Communists have laboured to raise

We Liang-p'ing put it in unequivocal language from the point of view of the Communists :

"This agrarian revolution and the anti-Japanese struggle are intermingled. How can we fight the imperialists? Only by organising the peasants and workers. In order to organise

the peasants, their interests must be taken care of. At a certain stage in the anti-Japanese War, the agrarian problem must be settled. This is not Socialism. It is a part of bourgeois anti-feudal revolution .... In order to fulfil the socialist revolution, the proletariat must have friends, must mobilise a reserve army of allies. This means the peasantry. To attempt to have a socialist revolution in the village would mean to liquidate the rich peasants. This in turn would influence the wavering middle peasants as allies of the democratic movement. So far the Communist Party has kept the alliance with the middle peasants, and if the rich peasants do not obstruct us and will support the anti-Japanese struggle, we will welcome them to join with us." \*

Though trade is free, exports and imports are guided by the exigencies of the war situation. Unnecessary goods, such as luxuries, are prevented from entering the Border Region. Necessities for consumption by the Border Region itself are prevented from going out.

Here is a short official statement of the position :

"The policy of trade and commerce of the Border Region is for the progress of 'economic construction', and therefore within the Border Region private business and free trade is encouraged, but exports and imports are under control. Export of native goods and import of necessary provisions of daily livelihood are specially encouraged. For the convenience of people in marketing, and also to limit exploitation by commercial capitalists, marketing and supplying co-operatives are organised. A Bureau of Trade and Commerce is formed, to undertake commerce with other parts of China, under control and planning, to open up new routes for trade, to adjust prices, to direct commerce in general.

"At present, within the Border Region bandits have been cleared; safety, security and good order prevail; heavy taxation has been lifted from the people's shoulders; population has increased year by year; the people's standard of livelihood has much improved; the level of consumption has risen. Because of these favourable conditions, the progress in trade and commerce is very significant. New markets are opened up, old markets extended on a bigger scale. For example, take Yenshi; before the revolution there were only a handful of sleepy small shops. Now there



are more than 400 large and small business enterprises. The capital invested has increased ten times. Imports and exports have also increased. Take salt. In 1938 salt exports were only 7,00 horseloads; in 1939 there were 19,000; in 1940, 23,000 horseloads; this year it will be raised to 30,000 horseloads. Take furs, skins and leather. They are also increasing year by year, although war has affected their export. Owing to the rapid rise of the cost of industrial goods, the cost of native goods cannot follow up as rapidly; therefore the exchange is on an unequal basis. The total amount of exports and imports both increased; yet the amount imported is still smaller than that exported.

"As to the causes of unequal exchanges, besides the rise in the cost of industrial goods, there is also the blockade of the enemy. Therefore our policy of trade and commerce must be flexible and adaptable to the constantly changing conditions. The consumers' co-operatives play an important part in developing marketing and in checking exploitation by usurers. Especially hereafter more weight will be put on the work of collection and storage of native goods, production and transportation; thereby the consumers' co-operatives have the prospect of fulfilling the task of combating the enemy's blockade. The following is a table of the development of the consumers' co-operatives:—

Year	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941
Number of co-operatives	142	109	115	132	138
Members	57,877	66,707	82,885	153,279	153,269
Shares, paid	55,225	75,629		269,756	373,200
Reserves	3,549	5,420	24,596	41,678	63,533
Total of goods sold	261,189	391,260	552,246	156,435	173,720
Gross profit from goods sold	31,905	48,363	99,432	218,051	415,864
Expenses on Management	27,083	31,460	52,421	160,645	150,061
Net profit	4,821	16,893	47,011	121,405	265,803
Number of persons working		11	426	490	601

"The Border Government exercises strict control over prices of all kinds of goods, mainly necessities. When compared with prices that obtain in other parts of China, prices in Yen-an are 30 to 40 per cent less. Hoarding is not permitted on

any profiteering scale. Trade and commerce are given a free hand not to loot the public, but to serve it at reasonable profit."

\* \* \*

In a mountainous country, with hardly any roads as we know them in 'civilised' countries, the problem of transport of goods and travel bristles with unexpected difficulties.

"The first day out of Yen-an was a day I shall never forget. About thirty *li* away we learned that the road ahead of us was so bad that no animals could possibly pass. Men might manage it, but not our horses or pack mules ...."

And then, - "Once I took my eyes from the distant plateau and looked down the side of my stretcher. Below me yawned a vast, deep ravine. The sides had crumpled away. I turned to the other side, to avoid looking into this abyss, only to find that another abyss yawned on that side. I was swinging in space, with what seemed a bottomless ravine on either side of me. Only the carriers before and behind me showed that the earth was there, under their feet.....Our party had gone between two great caverns. No earth remained between them except a narrow footpath about two feet wide. One more deluge of rain and this whole path, three hundred feet long, would crumble away and the two abysses would merge into one. Farther on we met our pack animals returning. They were cut off from the paths before them by a landslide." \*

This is what the rain does to the *kutchu* roads, in the inevitable loess land.

But the Border Government has been making considerable efforts to meet the situation. An official statement declares -

"For the purposes of economic construction, for the development of military and commercial transport, the Government of the Border Region has set aside 400,000 to 500,000 dollars for the construction of roads to connect Fuhsian-Mitze, Ding-Ching, Ching-Ling, Yen-ling, Yen-Ging, Yen-Tzi, Ding-Tzi, Wu-Tai, Fu-Chang, Yen-Nan. The roads constructed so far measure 1851 kilometers, 976 kilometers being newly built and 445 km. still in the stage of fresh planning. These do not include the Kuanchung and Shengfu roads. All this construction work in the mountainous Shenpei, is a very big event in its history.

"As a result of the progress of trade and industry, the Government began to organise the forces of transport. After

several years of steadfast work, livestock breeding has grown. Co-operatives have established 17 transport units. During the leisure season in the villages, large numbers of units among the people are organised to do transport work, and also to increase their income. The call for transport of salt last year, which organised vast masses into action, provided splendid results. Secondly, wagons and other means of transportation have been built in large numbers. Wagon factories increase year by year. There are nine public wagon plants today, the capital amounting to 200,000. A new-style square wagon is constructed, greatly raising the efficiency of transportation. At cross roads and on main roads, transport stations, wells, shops, and grazing grass,—all means of improving efficiency in transportation are provided."

All this has meant a small revolution in itself

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Sir Stafford Cripps once declared: "The Chinese Industrial Co-operatives—the Kung Ho, 'Work-Together'—are building the foundations of a new democracy in China."

What is this "Indusco"?

The idea behind the movement may be summed up in a phrase: "An ounce of planning is worth several tons of bombs." With Japanese mastery in the air, with the mechanised hordes of the fascist invader sweeping from one important industrial centre to another, with the sea-ports lost, and with them the commerce with foreign lands, China had only one option: to plan its industries on a new basis, or become the dumping ground of Japan's traders. Thus China would have to break new ground or become the supply depot for its enemy as regards the raw materials which would ultimately be transformed into more bombs and more aeroplanes, and certain slavery for China itself. Japanese plans for the economic exploitation of the conquered territory must be frustrated. The vicious greed of the Shanghai and coast-town bankers in trading Japanese goods in free China, allowed to pass through by obliging Jap commanders, had to be countered.

The idea of a web of small-scale industrial units, so dispersed that it would be impossible to bomb them out of existence all at the same time, each unit so compact and small that sturdy Chinese shoulders could carry the plant inland before an advancing foe,—this was the germ of the whole structure which

has spread so widely all over China. It first struck Nym Wales, after her visit to Red China. The Soviets had already worked the plan, though on a scale to suit their own needs. Just as the whole of free China now faced a blockade practically on all sides, so did the Soviets from 1927 onwards face blockade at the hands of Chiang's armies. And the Soviets had inaugurated their own cooperative industries,—spinning and weaving plants and small machine shops, all catering to the simple needs of a war economy to feed the Red Army and the peoples of the Soviet Regions.

In September 1933, the Kiangsi Soviet claimed no less than 4,423 production and distribution co-operatives. 'State factories', mostly spinning and weaving, for cotton and wool, had also been successfully organised. Where the rural co-operatives of the Nanking Government had been sucked dry by feudal corruption, the Communists, with their zeal for building, had eminently succeeded.

Sufficient manufactured goods were produced to tide over the blockade. They helped to keep the area out of economic bankruptcy.

After the Long March, when Pao An was the capital of Soviet China, and later in 1937, when Yen-an became the centre of the special Border District, this was the main basis of industrial economy.

"Several factors operate in Yen-an, which probably have few parallels elsewhere. For one thing, these guerilla industries represent a very small investment in capital goods,—machinery and plant. Land and property have either been given to them or leased at a nominal rental by the Border Government. The few simple machines and tools needed have been made by the workers, or cheaply purchased locally. Overhead is unbelievably low. Depreciation is small. There is no tie-up of capital in unsold stocks. Marketing is almost immediately consummated on the spot, or through customers' co-operatives, or Government or Army distributing organs. Management and technical supervision cost virtually nothing." \*

Co-operatives, ranging from credit production to marketing, had already been securely established in Yen-an and guerilla territories influenced by the Eighth Route Army, when Nym Wales took the idea, enlarged it to become comprehensive enough to embrace all China, and put it over to Rewi Alley,

the New Zealander, who was to become the living fulcrum of the Indusco.

When the Soviets were abandoned and the special Border Region formed, a Conference of Yen-an co-operative workers met and discussed the change, and offered to become a part of the national organisation of co-operatives. They sought facilities dictated by the experience they had gathered of the work behind enemy lines.

Only in December 1939, the Yen-an Co-operative Conference adopted the constitution and text books of the National C. I. C. in Chungking. There had been considerable opposition from the usual reactionary sources in the Kuomintang against extending the web of the Indusco to the (Communist) regions. It took two years before the offer of a merger from the Yen-an co-operatives could be accepted.

By this time the Yen-an co-operatives had organised no less than one lakh families. There were 137 productive co-operatives with a membership of 28,326, much more than the rest of the Chinese Industrial Co-operatives put together after a year of functioning in the whole of China. Nearly 114 co-operatives are connected with spinning, six with weaving, nine are oilpressing, three linked to salt producing, and so forth. The subscribed capital has amounted to 30,000 dollars. Fourteen counties have been covered, and in an area where a trip to a branch may take anything between three to ten days.

"Many villages were so poor that they could jointly purchase only two or three spinning wheels. These were passed from house to house, each part-owner working a certain number of hours at home. The greater part of the co-operative capital was invested in oil-pressing, salt-refining, and weaving plants, and in flour-milling, charcoal, bean-curd, porcelain and pottery co-operatives..... Here were thousands of people already organised and educated in co-operative production, lacking only capital and machinery with which to exploit local raw materials." \*

When at last, in 1939, the C. I. C. formed its first depot at Yen-an, once again crystallisation of opposition in Chungking forced it to remain unworked for nearly six months. Twenty-eight out of thirty branch co-operatives had to close down, mainly for lack of capital. The Construction Department of the Border Government and the Border Government Bank, an

institution mainly fed by capital procured from the savings of peasants, small traders, soldiers and students of the Border Region, fathered the orphan and tided it over the period of 'desertion'. They gave to the C. I. C. Depot in Yen-an a loan which equalled a fourth of the Bank's total assets. The Institute of Natural Science of Yen-an rushed in with its technical staff to aid in organising the work.

"Although ordinarily considered the most backward region in China, for various reasons the population greeted the Indusco movement with enthusiasm." This is the testimony of Nym Wales herself. Yen-an certainly realised the potentialities of guerilla industries, the role that Indusco Depots could play in fighting the invader, in strengthening the unity of the Chinese nation as a whole. But it was left to the Chinese overseas, from the Phillipines and Java, to send money to build up Indusco units behind the Jap lines, for a considerable time before Chungking could overcome its prejudices regarding the Communists.

"Large quantities of raw materials were moving from behind Chinese lines into urban markets controlled by Japan—materials such as cotton, wool, vegetable oil, iron and coal. Filtering back from the cities came cheap Japanese manufactures. This was true not only in all the front-line provinces held by the Central Army, where many officials openly engaged in the smuggling trade, but even in certain guerilla areas defended by Communist troops, who found it extremely difficult, in practice, to enforce a complete trade embargo against the occupied cities... Red leaders pointed to another fact.....that the largest numbers of refugees and unemployed were not in the rear or in West China, but in the villages of the occupied areas, near cities held by the Japanese.. In 1939...the great floods in Hopei, Shantung and Shansi inundated hundreds of villages and placed on the guerilla regimes a tremendous burden of tens of thousands of destitute men and women.....Meanwhile, all through the Border Regions valuable natural resources lay idle, such as anthracite and coking coal, iron, sulphur, salt and soda.....Millions of bales of cotton were drawn into Japanese markets.....To control and manage crops, to create industry and jobs, required capital—in guerilla areas, as anywhere else...In practice Government (Central) economic measures, which give us the true judgment of intentions, ex-

tended virtually no aid in the re-financing of production in the guerilla areas.....Ten times more Government money was sunk in the one province of Szechuan.....to finance agricultural and industrial production, than in all the guerilla bases combined.. In 1940 the Government announced a plan to increase agricultural credit loans by a sum of 400 million dollars—of which not two per cent was made available to the front-line areas ' For the guerilla-controlled parts of seven provinces, which were economically and militarily the focal point of the war, there was no banking capital available... As one official put it to me, (this) will 'anyway keep the Reds from getting too strong.' " \*

Slowly the Indusco Depots multiplied and widened their base. Capital and machinery and technicians were found for a variety of small factories. Essential and basic medicines and medical accessories like bandages and gauze, chemicals, soda, alcohol, paper, ink, chalk, soap, tooth-powder, oil-lamps, metalware, shoes, leggings, fur-coats, stockings, cloth and clothing, were all covered one after the other. By the end of 1940, iron and coal mines, machine shops, iron works, two small oil-wells, drug factories, transport units and a sports-goods factory, had been added. Consumers' co-operatives are playing an increasing role in developing marketing and in checking the exploitation of usurers. In 1938, there were 109 co-operatives with a membership of 66,000; by 1941, there were 138 co-operatives with over one and a half lakh members. The turn-over of goods has increased simultaneously from four lakhs to seventeen and a half lakhs.

Quality, as well as quantity, was still limited. Simplicity, almost bordering on primitiveness, still obtained in much that was produced. But progress was a constant factor. Centuries were being skipped in course of months. The Academy of Natural Sciences of the Border Government laboured hard at the job of improvement, utilising three-fourths of its foreign and locally trained personnel of experts for this work. The Border Region must be made self-sufficient in its essential requirements. The Border Region must become the main industrial base for the whole North-West, including within its scope the territories behind the enemy lines. That is the outlook of the Indusco of Yen-an.

Describing his experience of Indusco work in the North West, Rewi Alley wrote : "It is quite a lyric. Refugee co ops,

guerilla co-ops, co-ops backed by Catholic priests, Protestant missionaries, a Y. M. C. A. Co-op.....one sees in action some of the things one has dreamed about. Inmates of a Buddhist hospital for opium addicts came one day saying they smoked opium, because they had not hope of getting any work to do. They asked for work, to start a flour mill beside a mountain stream. Now they are working in the sunshine, and completely curing themselves. A man came and said he thought he knew where he could put his hand on some hidden spinning wheels. He asked for a loan to buy half a bale of cotton. He received far more than this pathetic request. He found the machines and got them working. He mobilised six of the unemployed workers from his old factory. They had their first meeting as a co-op. Production is now £ 50 monthly in this plant.....In this region a fairly typical Indusco unit was a carpentry shop. Members lived communally in a dormitory with double tiers of beds. They had a club-room. The day's schedule of work was prominently displayed with the rules of the association on the walls. On the walls hung the slogans: Industrial Co-ops are Really the Workers' Shops; Industrial Co-ops are the Method of Boycotting Japan; Cleanliness is Health and Good Health means Better Work; Industrial Co-ops are the 'Livelihood Principle' in Action; In Our Society only Those Who Work Shall Eat." \*

Consider now the difficulty that the Indusco faces when it sets out to organise a branch of a depot in guerilla territory. "The Anhui International Centre...is... situated above Shanghai near the Yangtze River; it is right in the heart of the fighting zone in Jap-occupied territory. The nearest headquarters is 700 miles distant, and it takes sometimes months to get communications through the dangerous intervening enemy lines.. Machinery has to be smuggled in from Ningpo or other cities by carriers... The complications are commensurate only with the extreme need, however. The area is one of the most economically strategic points in all China, as well as the scene of tragic refugee conditions and urgent supply requirements..... The marvel is that (the centre) was ever started at all, and the achievements show that indusco activity is possible in any danger zone. In the beginning, local reactionaries refused to let any co-operatives be started to help the New Fourth guerillas. Part of the money was used to start units for Central Troops instead, though they have been requested to pay back this 'loan'



as soon as possible. The result, however, seems to be working out fairly well. Indusco units to help the Central Troops were started first and finally spread to the New Fourth villages. The three depots include co-operatives for both the New Fourth and Central Armies. Therefore, they are an 'inter-political' centre as well as an internationally supported one. A fascinating experiment, really in view of the constant tension between the two sides." \*

Difficulties never frightened the Chinese Comrades. The spirit of service and sacrifice with which the Communist had infected the whole administration caught the Indusco organisers too. Their wages voluntarily scaled down to 5 dollars a month, in actual fact many times less than what the ordinary skilled workers in the Indusco factories draw as wages. This fact has resulted in a saving of seventy to eighty per cent as compared with other C. I. C. depots, a substantial addition to actual working capital.

"The pity of it was that a couple of million American dollars (say, 40 million Chinese dollars) invested in machine-shops and 'semi-mobile' industries throughout the northern guerilla areas might have effectively frustrated Japan's plans for economic exploitation of the Eastern hinterland. That industry, with an annual production of half-a-billion dollars worth of commodity necessities, could have brought economic security, fortified civilian livelihood and morale, and made the defending armies virtually self-sufficient in secondary war-supplies—explosives, rifles, grenades, bayonets and individual equipment. Unfortunately, the importance of this was not understood even among those few key officials, politicians and bankers, whose patriotism might have overcome their political prejudices.

"Indusco was one organisation whose leaders did understand it. They were consequently charged with 'Communism' for urging the extension of industry to the guerilla districts, and many technicians and organisers were thrown into jails by over-zealous nit-wits.

"Meanwhile, Chungking's great minds apparently saw nothing wrong, for example, with the practice of shipping hand grenades from Szechuan across hundreds of miles to the iron and sulphur regions of Shansi, where they could be produced locally for a quarter of the transportation costs alone. They

criticised the Eighth Route Army for poor demolition work, but would supply them with no high explosives—and were horrified when Yen-an technicians wanted to buy a sulphuric acid plant at Sian to make explosives of their own. Periodic blockades were imposed against the Border Regions, and exportation of machinery into them was frequently forbidden. It was often found less troublesome to raid Japanese-held towns just to get tools or machines, than to buy them in the Kuomintang areas.” \*

The mountainous north-north-west is rich in minerals and natural resources. Petroleum, coking coal, sulphur, anthracite, salt, soda, iron and cotton are all available in sufficient quantities. Hides, agricultural products and medicinal herbs are plentiful. Lack of enough capital prevents their exploitation by either the Indusco or private enterprise. And what is the result? A direct strengthening of the fascist invader. It is the Japanese who reap the harvest. But the reactionary cliques who wire-pull the ‘Chungking Government will not permit the purse-strings to open to let the vital North and North-West areas harness their economic resources. The Red Bogey is far too formidable for them.

“According to the budget (for all the Indusco centres in the Border Region), the monthly regular expense is 2,200 Chinese dollars”, (equivalent to 110 U. S. dollars). \* \*

“It was reckoned, that 26 shillings (Rs. 17) would finance a worker in Indusco. In the Border Regions, half that sum was sufficient. Elsewhere the rate of capital turn-over in C.I.C. units in terms of production-value ranged from 12 to 15 times a year. The monthly production report of the Yen-an Depot, C.I.C. (Head-quarters of the guerilla industrial base), September 1939, indicates a production-value of 25.2 times invested capital.” \*\*\*

And again, “The Eighth Route Army and all guerilla leaders are extremely anxious to combat Japanese economic aggression, but they are totally without capital. Local capital has fled. Unless Central Government or banking and private loans and contributions are extended, development is practically impossible and Chinese financial control will collapse utterly. Reviving the confiscation of landlord property might help to solve agrarian distress, but even this would not provide capital for industrialisation. From this point of view, if the Central

Government and the foreign Powers wish to avoid a revival of sovietism in China, their best safeguard is to give immediate financial help to the Eighth Route Army people, particularly for a 'middle-way' co-operative movement. Both militarily and economically, the guerilla regions, at the front and in occupied areas, are now the key strategic points of the war. If Japan succeeds there, China must decisively lose the war, and the rest of the country must inevitably come within the orbit of Japanese conquest." \*

Yenan, the stronghold of progressive democracy, the one place where the 'People's Livelihood Principle' most needs to be worked efficiently, requires capital even more than ammunition. The guerilla can snatch a rifle and a machine-gun from the Jap soldier, but capital cannot be obtained in the same way. Otherwise the North-West would have been the richest area in China today.

And yet that small bit of capital is denied to the Border Regions by people in Chungking, who negotiate loans in thousands of millions from the U.S.A. and Great Britain! Dog in manger? Yes, if the dog had class politics in it to the point of being rabid.

In the meanwhile, the Construction Department of the Border Region has been struggling on further and ever further. The going is rougher at every step. But progress is maintained nevertheless. Optimism and Chinese Communism are synonymous terms, at least as far as the Indusco work is concerned. They refuse to abandon hope. They pin their faith to the logic of events, and to the rising spirit and morale of the people of China. Have they a genuine basis for their hope?

"Many groups and individuals interested in the future of China have become seriously interested in building up this form of economic co-operation between the Central Government and the Eighth Route and the New Fourth Armies, as a means of cementing the precarious unity of the Chinese. These include conservatives who do not want to see the Left pushed towards Sovietism in China again, progressives, liberals, missionaries and overseas Chinese, as well as individuals who merely think their money will be put to better strategic use by these guerillas than elsewhere. There is a definite possibility that a common economic programme along the lines of the co-operative industry may prevent a future civil war in China, as in the

meantime it encourages the present democratic tendency to move forward, and helps the development of all regions through internal peace and reconstruction....." \*

The Indusco has a political role to perform. Chungking has not seen fit to give up the step-motherly treatment it meets out to the Border Region. But the tide must turn if China is to win.

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## CHAPTER V

### 'BALU CHUN'—WHAT THE GODS CANNOT DESTROY

" 'Is there anything that you, as commander of the former Chinese Red Armies, would like to tell the foreign countries?'

"Chu's genial expression for the first time became serious.

" 'Yes,' he said, 'there is this. You know the Japanese excuse for their present military action in China—that they are fighting Communism. They use this propaganda to justify what is, quite simply, the invasion of our country. You know how false this propaganda is. You know the Eighth Route Army is not fighting for Communism in China but is joining with all the other Chinese armies to fight for China's national independence. Along with the armies of the Kuomintang, we are fighting for a free and democratic Chinese Republic. Tell all the friendly foreign nations the truth about this, so that no one can any longer believe the 'anti-Red' inventions of the Japanese propagandists.'

" 'I am convinced that Chu Teh was sincere in this as he said it. And all that I had seen of the Chinese Communists in their own district and in the army, fully supported the claim. From their side, at least, there would be no danger to the United Front. It was this kind of political unity that was new in China; and if it could prove enduring, then it might not have been bought at too great a cost.' \*

What Chu Teh—literally 'Red Virtue'—told James Bertram in 1939, and the impressions he gathered about the Eighth Route Army, should lay at rest the ghosts which fevered minds obsessed by class interest and prejudice seek to raise against the brilliant and epoch-making achievements of the 'Baluchun', the Eighth Route Army, now renamed the Eighteenth Group Army.

The Red Army, before it crossed the Yellow River to go to the North-West, had numbered not more than fifty to sixty thousand soldiers. By the end of 1940, the number had swelled no less than five times. To-day, it is in the neighbourhood of five

lakhs and seventy thousand fighters. This computation does not take into account the partisans or guerillas, who are not classed as 'regulars'. Their numbers are legion.

How has this change come about? In the midst of the fiercest offensives, surrounded on all sides by troops which block contact with the outside world beyond the narrow confines of the North-North-West, facing an enemy who has superior armour, superior ammunition, panzer battalions and aeroplanes, when the Central Government does not regularly supply the wherewithal to carry on the battle, working in conquered territory where the Japanese machine-guns peep from every strategic hill-top and all along the railways as well as in the important market towns—how was the miracle performed?

The answer, for a man who has witnessed the Eighth Route Army in action, is not at all baffling.

"By the middle of 1940, millions of peasants in the North China countryside had been organised, indoctrinated with revolutionary ideas for the first time, and had attained some measure of political and economic emancipation. They now constituted, for Chinese resistance, a human bulwark far more subtle and elastic than many miles of earthworks and trenches and one which neatly accommodated itself to the tactical needs of the mobile Eighth Route Army. They were the healthy corpuscles that China had mobilised to fight off the malignant invasion of fascism. It was, incidentally, when a young Communist commander used that metaphor in talking to me that I first understood why the Chinese always preferred to speak of 'resistance' against Japan, rather than of 'war'. 'As far as China is concerned,' he said, 'Japanese imperialism is a contagious disease, and our people mobilising are just like good blood cells in a man's body resisting the invading germs, as intended by nature.' Then he added, chuckling, 'And the difference between us and the Kuomintang is that we think it is a *deadly* disease, and our blood cells need the help of scientific medicine, while the Kuomintang thinks our medicine is too revolutionary and worse than the disease.' Which, now that I think of it, is almost exactly the way Chen Li-fu put the case to me from the Kuomintang viewpoint." \*

The 'mobilisation of the people', in the areas in which the Eighth Route Army functions, could not mean the conscription of the able-bodied young men wherever found. It

could never be effected in the sparsely populated North-West by high-handed decrees, or for the matter of that, by any compulsory measure, however cloaked. Here, mobilisation of the people would have to mean complete mobilisation, mobilisation of the old as well as the young, of the strong and the weak, of men as of women and children. And, therefore, it had to be organised on a voluntary basis, the peasant and the worker had consciously to feel the war as his own, for *his* interests, in order to safeguard and build *his* future.

The Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies are both recruited from volunteers. Conscription has not been resorted to at any stage of their history. Their links with the people brought them the support without which their very existence was not possible. They are both the most poorly paid armies in China, or possibly the world. They are armies manned by Chinese with the spirit of missionaries, ready to die and sacrifice their all for the cause of their country's freedom. They are the armies which fight the modern crusades against the infidel fascists, armies with the morale of the immortal International Brigade in Spain. Here the soldier and the officer live on the same standard of life, General Chu Teh, the Commander-in-Chief, drawing the regulation pay of five dollars (Chinese) a month. A General in the Kuomintang armies draws 800 dollars a month, whilst the soldier draws anything between five and six-and-a-half dollars. In fellowship and equality, with no distinguishing marks between high and low, the same uniform for the General as for the soldier, with intelligent and democratic discipline, these soldiers of freedom lead the puritanical lives of saints, and fight against the Japanese brutes like demons.

Their 'Rules of Conduct' are enlightening, equally binding on the commanding officer as on the newest recruit. They have made a song of them, and sing it as they march :

- 1) Secure the owner's permission before entering a house and see that all is well before you leave it. Always thank your hosts.
- 2) Keep the house clean.
- 3) Be courteous and helpful to the people.
- 4) Return all borrowed articles ; never rob the people.
- 5) Replace all damaged goods.

- 6) Be honest, and pay for everything you buy at market price.
- 7) Be sanitary; dig latrines a safe distance from people's houses.
- 8) Do not kill or rob the prisoners you take.

There are five forms of disciplinary action to which they are liable: (1) Remonstrance by the chief concerned. (2) Judgment in mass meeting of all comrades. (3) Internment on a farm. (4) Temporary suspension. (5) Permanent expulsion.

"Equality prevails here as in all spheres of life, but obedience is required to the command of the officers, which however are not arbitrary and bureaucratic, as in the case of the Kuomintang. The Kuomintang Army is bureaucratic, corrupt, and unstable. The Communist Army is an army of the people, a fraternity of soldiers. This is the big difference that I have noticed " \*

This is confirmed from another source. James Bertram describes a meeting of the Red Military Academy at Yen-an when Mao Tse-tung spoke. "Mao went on to describe the 'three disciplines' of the Eighth Route Army—to act strictly under orders; never in any way to violate the interests of the peasants and workers; to confiscate the property only of traitors and 'pro-Japanese elements.' 'Remember', he said, 'that you must not take even one potato from the peasants, for if you take one, you will want to take more! This has been a weakness of some of the old-style Chinese armies, that they did not always respect the rights of the common people, and so did not always have good relations with the people. Without such close relationship, the armies cannot fight effectively.' " \*

Let us listen to Chu Teh himself on the reasons for the continued existence and success of the Red Army in China. He is speaking in the days of civil war :

"The most important reason is that the Red Army is led by the Communist Party, and the Party Members are models for the fighters to follow. Second, the Red Army has been, is supported by the masses. Third, the Red Army is one integrated whole, united as one man. Fourth, the Red Army fighters are brave and heroic because they belong to the oppressed classes. Fifth, the Red Army is militarily efficient because our tactics and strategy have been developed through long and hard years



of battle and experience. Sixth, because the mass of the people support the Red Army and give us complete and accurate information, we are always familiar with the topography of the country; and the movements of the enemy are blind, having no such voluntary support. Seventh, every Red Army man is fighting for the same purpose, so the command is always followed and discipline is perfect. Therefore, the Red Army is not only militarily but politically well-disciplined and conscious. Eighth, our propaganda among the 'White' troops has helped us very much. We treat captives well and they carry back favourable reports. In general, the 'White' troops themselves are not enthusiastic in fighting the Red Army, because the common soldiers are oppressed by their officers.

"Of course, the basic reason why the Red Army was able to develop in China is the necessity of agrarian revolution in China, and the need for protecting the land afterwards. Another reason is the contradictions in Chinese society, which cause many civil wars to occur, thus making the position of such an army more favourable for continued existence. The Chinese ruling class is weak and cannot control some areas. This, together with bad communications and complex topography, created a situation favourable for the Red Army to maintain itself." \*

Improvement in the condition of the masses is a cardinal principle with the Communist armies. The worried Chinese worker or peasant has been fooled so long by glib promises that he was not likely to be taken in by any paper programmes of the Communists. If he to-day swears by the Communists in the North-West, if new paths are being chalked out in his life in the old valleys of Yen-an and the North in general, it is because the Communists have lived up to their promises, because the principle of 'People's Livelihood' has been consistently implemented by the Communist armies. "Because the masses are interested only in the practical solution of their problems of livelihood, it is possible to develop partisan warfare only by the immediate satisfaction of their most urgent demands," declared Peng Teh-huai, field commander of all Red troops in the North.

Another reason which has made the Communist armies practically invincible is their deep-rooted revolutionary consciousness. They fight for a cause, they approve of the

cause, they know that to lose the cause is to lose all that they hold dear in life. Every soldier is imbued with the fervour of a religious zealot, a fervour which is the outcome of knowledge and understanding, the outcome of clear-headed political analysis, proved to be correct over and over again. The training of soldier and officer is practically identical. It is said to be forty per cent political and sixty per cent military, if such a proportion could be worked out mathematically. Each unit includes a political commissar who co-operates with the military commander at every step, only giving way on the actual battlefield. Elected soldiers' committees work together with the political commissars, and take an active interest in games, songs, propaganda work in the villages, the cultural clubs, the literacy schools and the functioning of the eight Rules of Conduct.

Anna Louise Strong went and stayed with the Eighth Route Army. Let us listen to her: "Living at headquarters, I saw the programme of daily training which developed the initiative and fighting ability of the soldiers and made these successes possible. Military training was only part of the programme; general and political education were included as well.

"Most of the new recruits, like most Chinese peasants, were illiterate, but they were immediately taught to read and write. The day's programme included rising at six-thirty, morning exercises at seven-thirty, breakfast at nine-thirty, political training at ten, military training at twelve, general education at two, dinner at four-thirty, then games, social gatherings and singing until nine or ten, when they went to bed. A two-hour period was allowed for each type of education, the first hour usually being given to lectures and the second either to discussion, study or rest. The rather long time allowed for sleeping made up to some extent for the very scanty ration of millet or steamed bread with some vegetable, served but twice a day.

"A mile over the hills from the village where Chu Teh had his headquarters, a similar village housed the political department of the army, which organises all the education and the army's contacts with the population. It has five sections: Organisation, Education, People's Movements, Enemy Service, and Work Against Traitors. The section on Organisation helps to pick personnel for higher posts in the army and for work

among the farmers. Every company has its 'political director' who both carries on education and constantly seeks for men suitable for promotion through training. Appointments of military commanders are made by the commanders of the next higher unit, but always in consultation with the Political Department.

"The section on Education not only conducts the training of leaders and the compulsory educational courses in the army but it organises clubs and a variety of voluntary educational activities. Even on a march and before a battle some type of educational training goes on. 'If we march only ten or fifteen miles, we can still have a short class,' said the director of this section. 'If we march twenty or thirty miles we have no formal class on that day, but the political leader in each company uses the halts and the lunch period to lead songs and discuss current events. Before a battle the commander and political director call together the officers and explain the purpose and importance of the coming fight; then the officers and lower political workers explain it at meetings of the men. The plan of the great battle at Pinghsing Pass (first rebuff that the Japanese 'invincible' army received in China, and it was at the hands of the Eighth Route Army) was explained to all the soldiers by Lin Piao on the day before. In most armies soldiers are not told where or why they are going. In our army some details are concealed for reasons of military secrecy, but every soldier knows the meaning and general plan of the coming action and must be prepared to act on his own initiative in emergencies.'

"Much of the agitation among the soldiers is done by simple lists of principles which can be easily memorised, such as: 'The Three Points of Discipline,' or 'Eight Points to Remember', or 'The Anti-Japanese Ten-Point Programme'. These points have changed since the united front was formed with the Kuomintang. The first point of discipline, 'Obey Orders', remains. But 'Don't steal a cent from Workers and Peasants' has become 'Don't steal a cent from the Chinese People.' 'Confiscated Property of Landowners must not be made your Personal Property' has become 'Carry out the Anti-Japanese Ten-Point Programme.' The 'Points to Remember' consist of simple, homely rules for proper treatment of civilians.....Even the actions of wounded and dying men are planned to accord

with the safety of the Army. In the few minutes' agitation before going with them into battle, the political director tells them, 'If slightly wounded, don't leave the line; if seriously wounded, don't groan !' \*  
\* \* \*

The links of the Communist Armies with the people—with the peasants and 'coolies' considered to be 'backward', 'ignorant' and 'filthy' by supercilious foreign commentators on Chinese life—are links forged from steel, absolutely unbreakable. Two instances, which are really representative, will show how the war against the fascist invader is considered to be a family feud by the Chinese peasant, in which the villager and the Red soldier belong to one indivisible family. And this is all the more interesting because in China the traditional family has been an extremely narrow and close unit, whose interests had to be safeguarded—under the old and hallowed Confucian philosophy—even against those of society in general as well as of the state.

In Central Hopei, the chief of a sub-district guerilla unit of the New Fourth Army fell into the hands of Japanese soldiers. Almost immediately an old woman of a nearby village appeared on the scene, weeping bitterly, loudly and plaintively imploring that he should be set free, and claiming him to be her only son, quite innocent of any misdeed against the Japanese. She refused to be shaken off. She followed the Japanese soldiers for several miles and generally made a nuisance of herself. Old and decrepit, she appealed to the better side of the soldiers, reminding them of their own mothers far away in Japan. At last the soldiers set him free, believing the old woman's story that he really was her son.

It was a spontaneous action on her part. She hugged and kissed the guerilla leader with real tears of joy streaming down her eyes after she had secured his release.

In the West Peiping area, the Eighteenth Group Army was creating worries for the occupation troops. The Japanese came to learn from an informant of the location of a company of the Chinese army in a particular village. They suddenly swooped down on the village in thousands, and surrounded it completely. The company had no time to flee. It was caught like a rat in a trap.

But when the Japanese cautiously entered the village lanes and went into the huts, they could find not a single Chinese soldier. Not one rifle, nor one bayonet could be located. They found peasants in plenty, in peasant garb, in peasant huts with peasant children and wives. The Japanese commander still had doubts. He ordered all the men-folk of the village to line up, and then asked the children one by one to pick out their fathers, brothers and near relations. When the last child had done the job, not one single Chinese was left standing in the line. All had been indentified ! The children had claimed the disguised soldiers as their own kith and kin. And in a most off-hand, convincing manner.

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The Japanese wreaked vengeance on their informant by shooting him for giving false information and withdrew.

Not only 'for' the people, but 'of' the people—such are the Communist soldiers of the Border Region.

"Our Army is among the people as the fish are in the sea," says Mao Tse-tung, and he certainly is not exaggerating.

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Whether you go by the highways or narrow winding paths down the valleys or up the hills, everywhere in North China, wherever the Communist Armies operate, you come across the *Hsiao Kwei*, the 'little devils,' small Chinese urchins, always smiling, always singing, always alert, serving as important links in the spy and communication systems of the Eighth Route and the New Fourth Armies.

James Bertram has described his visit to a brigade headquarters of the 129th Division of the Eighth Route Army:

"Every room (of the divisional headquarters) was thronged with *hsiao kwei*, those diminutive recruits who are to be found wherever this army travels. The 'little devils' in this brigade were more than usually curious, and my appearance (like that of any other 'Ta Bi-tze' or 'Big Nose') seemed to fascinate them."

One such youngster spoke to him, a lad of fourteen years. He had been with this Communist army for three years. He had done the Long March and so had reason to consider himself a veteran.

"Everyone who has come in contact with the Chinese Red Army..... has found something to say in praise of the *hsiao kwei* or 'Young Vanguard', to give them their official designation. They are unique: to meet them is rather like meeting in real life those improbable bugle-boys and powder monkeys of fiction, whose juvenile exploits were so dear to a more adventurous world than ours. These youngsters in uniform, of all ages from ten to sixteen, are to be found in every branch of the Army. Many are orphans; more have run away from home, or from the factories to which they had been apprenticed or sold by their impoverished families. Though their unfailing cheerfulness does much to encourage the general high spirits of the army, they are far from being just mascots. They have their regular duties as messengers and orderlies, and are often organised into special service units to do intelligence work, propaganda or publicity. In the travelling theatre-companies they are always well-represented, and their education is never neglected for long. When they have earned the right to carry a gun of their own, they may take part in actual fighting, and here they have proved themselves utterly fearless with the annihilating and unself-conscious devotion of the very young.

"It is only when one knows something of the old China, with its universal ruthless exploitation of juvenile labour in city sweat-shops and rural industry, that one can really appreciate the miracle that freedom and a sense of responsibility have worked in the lives of these youngest fighters in the National Revolution. Their reckless gaiety, their *gamin* independence, are a new phenomenon in a Confucian society. For the first time, children born into the most oppressed class of the most oppressed country on earth have chosen for themselves what their lives shall become, and have identified themselves with a movement reaching for beyond the old ties of family or village. They belong to the New China they are helping to build. Old China can never reclaim them now." \*

Stories about the exploits of the *hsiao kwei* are many and varied. These two are typical of them.

Once two *hsiao kwei* received instructions to kill the traitor chairman of a local "wei-tz-hui" (a puppet organisation for maintaining 'law and order' on behalf of the Japanese.)

They found out that he frequented a certain tea-house every day. They went to the tea-house and waited on the landing of the staircase for him, with hand-grenades securely tucked away under their clothes. The chairman at last appeared, accompanied by his bodyguards. When he was halfway on the stair-case, the *hsiao kwei* flung the grenades and the staircase was smashed and so was the chairman. Chaos reigned supreme in the tea-house. From one corner the two boys set up loud howls: "Oh mama! Mum-um-ma! What shall I do? Some one has been killed! Kil-led! oh—oh—oh— I'm very frightened!" And the wail rose above the din. Japanese soldiers had by now surrounded the tea-house and were preparing to search and torture everybody inside. The boys set up louder shrieks. The Japanese soldiers had to get rid of them in order to get some kind of order restored. "Get away, you naughty imps! Run out of this place at once!" And actually they chased the boys out!

A *hsiao kwei* was once captured by the Japanese, and along with a *hsiang-chang* (a village magistrate) locked up for further investigation. The guard at the gate was a 'puppet' soldier. Late at night, when the guard was dozing, the *hsiao kwei* got the magistrate to escape. But he would not leave himself. He woke up the guard: "*Lao hsiang* (fellow townsman) wake up, wake up! See what kind of soup you are in! The *hsiang-chang* has escaped!" "Oh, what shall I do now?" "Now, listen, *lao hsiang*. It is no easy matter for you to report to your commander. If tomorrow he knows what you have done, your head will surely be chopped off. I think it is better for you too to run away. Come to our partisan units!"

At first, the guard hesitated, but at length he decided to take the advice. So, along with other captives, they set out together. "*Lao hsiang*, have you taken your rifle with you?" "No." "What a pity! If you only knew how precious a rifle means to the partisan!" And all this from a youngster who had not reached even adolescence.

Agnes Smedley has written about the *hsiao kwei* attached to her when she travelled with the Eighth Route Army.

"When we left Yen-an, my *hsiao kwei* was like a bird out of a cage. He is a tough little fellow, physically, in spite of the hard life he has led.....He investigated all parties of people marching far in front of us, and he investigated those in the

rear. He looked over the country in general.....He loves the open road, new places. He has known nothing else for years. He will undoubtedly grow to manhood in the army and may know nothing but fighting all his life....." \*

The children of China, trained by the Communist armies, are the promises, of a new world. They have weathered severe hardships. Self-immolation on the altar of revolution is all that they have known. The cause has uplifted their life and raised it to the pedestal of heroes. The stalwart soldiers of tomorrow, they will be the cream of the people's army of China. And they are bound to be invincible. Their spirit will inspire all Asia to rise and break the chains of long-established slavery.

The *hsiao kwei* model themselves after the bravest of the brave in the Communist armies. The future of China will be organised on the valiant shoulders of the *hsiao kwei* of to-day.

\* \* \*

"Looking back on the struggle in areas behind enemy's lines in North China, we are proud to say that we have been worthy of the hope and regard of our fellow countrymen, the sympathy and support of our foreign friends. In the past year, although under the enemy's constant attack and 'mopping up', although surrounded and intercepted by networks of railways, highways and canals, and blockaded by road-fortifying ditches, road-fortifying walls and chains of forts, although without getting any supply of either funds, for one and a half years, or munitions, for three years, we still maintained our bitter struggle in North and Central China, smashed the enemy's repeated attacks to pieces, crushed his campaign and strengthened public safety." \*\* So writes Chu Teh.

The 'mopping up' campaign of the Japanese takes weird shapes which can hardly be imagined without going into some frightful details. The most common form it adopts is known as the "Three All" method: Kill All, Burn All, Loot All. For example, in one of the campaigns—and there have been quite a number undertaken against the Communists in the last five years—both the banks of the Ta Ching River and the Tze Ya River, two tributaries of the River Hai, were 'mopped up'. Three hundred villages were burnt, and no less than ten thousand people murdered in cold blood. The victims ranged from old men and women of seventy and over, to children of the age of one or two.



We are given some harrowing details of one such 'mop-up' in Chinchí-Cha (Wutai).

"An account of only part of the doings is enough to make any civilised person boil with frenzy.....Airplanes supported this bloody campaign.....mercilessly bombing all, even small mountain villages, so that in large areas no villages remained standing, making the whole place a barren mass of desolation.....methodically they tried to 'clean up' each *hsien*.....Horses and cows were slaughtered. The ripe harvest was destroyed either by fire or letting loose cavalry horses..... In Lengchuan village, thirty old women and girls were rounded up, stripped of their clothes, made to dance in public, after which one by one they were disemboweled.....In the village of Huangli, they drove the peasants to the mountains in herds, and used machine guns from the rear. Very few escaped. Children were crushed in the mud, women in the family way disemboweled.....This has been the severest mopping-up campaign in that region during the war.....Dr. Kotnis of the Indian Medical Unit and the Staff of the Peace Hospital are all reported safe with their patients...Dr. Yu Sen-hua and thirty-one other doctors on the staff sacrificed their lives....." \*

And now Dr. Kotnis also has given his life in the same cause.

But it is not all plain-sailing for the Japanese either.

Reviewing the fight which the Eighteenth Group and the New Fourth Armies put up, Chu Teh records: "In the middle of July, the enemy concentrated eighty thousand men and headed for the Shansi-Hopei-Chahar Border Region in thirteen directions, naming 'it the great battle of one million', as a reply to our 'battle of a hundred regiments' of last year.....Fierce fighting continued for more than two months.....We waged more than eight hundred fights until late in October the enemy's attack was repelled.....The ratio of casualties is 5-3 to 1 in our favour." \*\*

Roughly fifty per cent and more of the Japanese troops in China are kept engaged in these 'mop-up' campaigns in North and Central China, single-handedly by the Communist Armies and their affiliates. The Japanese dare not withdraw even a small part of them. The guerilla armies are on all sides of them, between them and about them, and are on the offensive all the time.

“We never let the enemy have a moment’s rest. Especially since the outbreak of the Pacific War, by means of attacks we kept the enemy from moving his troops and made him feel most sharply his feet of clay. Not only are we an important factor in China’s resistance against Japan, but we also play an important role in the war of the Pacific.....That is not all. The resistance behind the enemy’s lines enables us to present our valuable experiences to the people of our country and the whole world. The experience of how to mobilise and organise the people’s armed struggle, that is, to develop guerilla warfare on a large scale, to start armed struggle co-ordinated with other kinds of struggle such as political, economic and cultural, to establish anti Japanese bases on democratic principles, in one word, is to carry out the strategic policy of ‘protracted war’ created by our Party leader, Comrade Mao Tse-tung.....We hope our experience will not be useless to other anti-fascist countries which are now under the claws of Hitler, or where the fascist devils are stretching their black hands over the world.” \*

## CHAPTER VI

### "BALU CHUN"—WHAT THE GODS CANNOT DESTROY (CONTD.)

Nym Wales asked Chu Teh what he thought were the lessons that must be learnt from the long struggle which the Chinese nation had undergone. In his methodical style, he replied: "In the anti-imperialist fight in semi-colonial countries, the struggle for democracy must be emphasised and a united front with the bourgeoisie must be realised. Feudal society has to be destroyed by a preliminary realisation of democracy. Feudal social forms cannot be changed without the democratic principle. The peasants and workers must first break their chains in feudal society, then join in the revolutionary struggle. In this effort, if the united front policy is adopted, the struggle is easier. Such a revolution must have an armed force, but this army must belong to the people...Perhaps the greatest lesson we have learned is that a people can fight victoriously with what resources it happens to have. The masses can get their guns if they have determination. It is easy to capture arms from the enemy by sudden attacks and night battles. The people can fight with bad arms, or even without formal arms at all. Any kind of weapon, if utilised correctly, can defeat the enemy, if the revolutionary spirit is there. The Red Army's mobility, and ability to arm itself out of thin air, have already become almost a legend in Chinese history, and some of the peasantry even think our power is magic, because of the apparent miracles we have been able to accomplish. Actually our magic power lies only in the fact that we attack swiftly at night, and withdraw as swiftly, so that the enemy can never find us unless we ourselves wish to engage them." \*

And Chu Teh said to Anna Louise Strong: "There is nothing so new about guerilla warfare. The American War of Independence against the British made extensive use of it. In the French Revolution, the people used it against the National Guards. The Russian people also carried on very extensive guerilla warfare in the war against intervention in 1918-19. It

is a tactic to which an embattled population resorts against superior military equipment. My studies in Germany convinced me that the German model is too elaborate and mechanical for China; it cannot easily be changed to suit changing conditions. I therefore studied more mobile methods of fighting. I found my best text-books in the Chinese classics, especially an old novel 'The Three Kingdoms', written nearly a thousand years ago." \*

To which General Peng Teh-hwei, Field-Commander of the Eighth Route Army, added: "The military use of guerilla fighting is to divide the enemy's attention, to cut communications, and mop up stragglers. The Eighth Route Army is not entirely a guerilla force, though it operates chiefly with guerilla methods. Battles the size of that at Pinghsing Pass can hardly be called guerilla tactics. Since we have so little military equipment, we make use of our knowledge of the topography and our connection with the people, in which we surpass the Japanese. To do this successfully we need first of all the confidence of the rural population, and second, a high degree of initiative and understanding on the part of every one of our ordinary soldiers. Since we have no planes, no field guns, no motorised units, but only hand-grenades, rifles, some trench mortars, and some machine-guns, we must plan our tactics to make maximum use of the type of weapon we have. Similarly China as a whole must plan her tactics to make maximum use of what she has. From the point of view of strategy this war as a whole should be prolonged, but individual battles should be short and decisive. A prolonged war is favourable to us because Japan is fighting on our territory surrounded by enemies, and therefore loses morale and meets transport difficulties. With us the situation is reversed, for the very fact of invasion arouses people to self-defence. 'People's self-defence against oppression'—that is the phrase that sums up guerilla warfare. The political aspect of this warfare is even more important than the military. We therefore send political rather than military officers to organise the people. They agitate against the Japanese to prevent them from forming puppet governments, collecting taxes and seizing property, and to boycott Japanese goods. The aim of this non-cooperation is to prevent the Japanese from establishing a foothold.

"The advantage of making individual battles short and decisive is that the enemy cannot use his fine equipment

advantageously. We attack as quickly as thunder, and leave as quickly; so the enemy has little preparation, and his airplanes, big guns, and tanks are of little value to him. We must make certain of success in every engagement, for we have no reserves to fall back on and could therefore be completely wiped out unless we knew him to get away. So we never engage the enemy unless we have him at a disadvantage; we attack either small groups, or weak spots in the line of communications, or large groups that are badly placed. We always take the initiative and surprise the enemy. For this kind of warfare we need very little ammunition, while the enemy needs very much. Guerilla forces, however, cannot carry through any final victory; their function is to keep up the morale of the people and to help the regular army by reducing the enemy's efficiency in a long drawn-out war." \*

'Total mass protracted resistance' is the grand strategy that the communists have evolved after years of experiment in warfare against the Kuomintang and the Japanese. The theory on which the strategy is based is simple. China is a land of vast dimensions with a population of 45 crores. The 'strategy of trading space for time', the 'theory of the limitless rear', are other phrases used to describe it. The Japanese cannot hope to garrison every village. All that they can hope to do is to consolidate their power by holding strategic 'inner lines'—the railways, the highways and the big cities, thus hoping to 'squeeze' the villages into submission by 'squeezing' their economy. The communist strategy seeks to convert the Japanese 'inner lines' into defensive 'outer lines', turning every village into a bastion of resistance, forcing the Japanese to maintain a garrison out of all proportion to the importance of the bases they hold, cutting the communication chords and isolating the bases, and one by one immobilising them. It is a strategy of quick 'short attack' in which the army indulges in complicated manoeuvres, the guerilla plays havoc in the rear and the flanks, and the partisan, of the volunteer people's army, rises and disappears behind each blade of grass, every tree, any broken wall of the most dilapidated and crumbled hut. Just as the Chinese are myriad in number, these 'pin-pricks' can be myriad too.

Peng Teh-hwei has listed six minimum essentials of a successful partisan operation: "Fearlessness, swiftness, intelligent planning, mobility, secrecy in movement, and suddenness and

determination in action. Lacking any of these, it is difficult for partisans to win victories. If in the beginning of a battle they lack quick decision, the battle will lengthen. They must be swift, otherwise the enemy will be reinforced. They must be mobile and elastic, otherwise they will lose their advantages of manoeuvre." \*

The partisan or guerilla action is always offensive in its scope. Men gather quickly, attack, and then disperse in a disciplined manner even more quickly than before. Delay spells death. Defensive fighting or passivity is the death knell. Constant movement and repeated attack are the *sine qua non*. A local Chinese saying is: 'the Yu-Chi-tvi (the guerillas) attack to annihilate and rove to avoid annihilation'. Such a unit may be anything between fifty and a thousand. The standard of discipline is very high, and is only possible to maintain because of the complete unanimity of the political aim and the inspiring revolutionary leadership afforded by the dare-devil communists. The guerilla never wears a uniform of any kind. He works as a peasant or labourer during the time he is not on his 'mission'. He may be attacking the Japanese soldiers, or cutting off railway line, blowing up bridges, pulling down telephone or telegraph poles, or just keeping intact the morale of the population in his village. All these he must do with an intensity such as to sweep away all obstacles, however huge, that face him.

Even when the army indulges in 'manoeuvring warfare', all the defences of points and lines in depth are temporary and flexible. Short attack and withdrawal are the chief considerations. Defence of a basic point against superior enemy firepower is never to be undertaken, because it is suicidal. The initiative is always to be preserved. When working in collaboration, the partisan or guerilla bands act as the eyes and ears of the regular army units, functioning in close and intimate contact with them.

"In storming fortified positions the guerillas invariably attack at night, depending on surprise, superior offensive spirit and knowledge of the terrain, to give them victory. In pouncing upon enemy troops in movement, they attempt to separate the columns by a variety of diversionist tactics. ....Then they attack the weakest point in the divided echelon from positions well prepared in advance. They constantly way-lay small

groups of Japanese and capture and disarm stragglers. Generally they make the countryside as inhospitable as possible to moving troops, seeking to keep their nerves always on edge, and robbing them of rest and sleep. Posing as guides, local guerillas sometimes lead enemy troops into an ambush..... Occasionally, learning of an enemy itinerary from spies in Japanese employ, a group of guerillas evacuates all the civilians from a village where moving troops plan to rest. Taking over all the domestic functions of the village, they wait till the weary invaders, suspecting nothing, settle down for the night; then at a signal the 'peaceful villagers' arise and annihilate the detachment..... Regular roads are obliterated, and false detours are built..... Hundreds of different devices are employed. As fast as the Japanese learn one trick, the guerillas invent another." \*

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The Eighteenth Group Army has now many main theatres of resistance. They are the Shansi Border, North-West Shansi, South-East Shansi, Northern Honan, Southern Hopei, Central Hopei, Eastern Hopei,

Round and about these strong points concentric circles of anti-Japanese people's organisations form a formidable belt. The belt may be penetrated. The strong-point attacked and stormed. But mobility and flexible battle tactics balk the enemy's aims—total annihilation of resistance. It is like trying to divide a pool of water by beating it with a stick. Under the drive and the blow of the stick, water parts and gives way, only to close up behind it, to wet it in the process, to exhaust its strength, and thus ultimately wear it out.

Several 'annihilation campaigns' have thus only succeeded in costly losses to the Japanese. Perfect timing, brilliant staff work and efficient communications, secure coordination between the different units, who pounce on the enemy at his psychologically weakest moment,—these are the watchwords.

James Bertram asked Chu Teh: "What is your opinion of the fighting quality of the Japanese army?"

Chu nodded pleasantly. "Very good," he said. "They are well-trained and very much better armed than our troops. They use their mechanical arms—armoured cars and planes—to great advantage when they get the opportunity. They are good

at taking cover, shoot well, and keep their arms in good condition.....But they have very definite weaknesses. One weak point is their infantry. The Japanese infantry, we have found are not very good at independent action. They depend entirely on mechanical means of transport for communications and supply. If these are cut off, they are at a real disadvantage. They cannot use animal transport or human labour as our armies can. They cannot take advantage of the hill country, but must follow the easiest and most level route. When we fight the Japanese we try to avoid their strong points and select their weak points for attack. So we always fight in the hills, not in open country. And we have the assistance of the people, whom we organise and train into partisan units, to harass the enemy lines of communication.....You see, outside of their main lines of advance, the Japanese hold nothing. Our troops are deep in their rear and in co-operation with the volunteer mobile units.....and the partisans occupy practically the whole of the territory through which they advanced. We have no rear to worry about, for we are fighting in our own country, and everywhere the people support us, give us food and assistance. If necessary, we can rely on the Japanese themselves for ammunition, for their cartridges fit our rifles. So you see, there are good prospects for continuing the war in North China." \*

It has been estimated that the combat efficiency of the Eighteenth group and the new Fourth armies is "roughly four hundred per cent better than that attained on any other front." Total mass protracted resistance is based on the active support of the whole population of the area of operation. It is the strategy of a real People's War with the masses as the moving spirits, the real heroes.

At the beginning of the sixth year of Chinese resistance to the fascist invaders, Chu Teh declared: "On our way of difficult struggle we can see the twilight of victory gleaming upon us.....Yet lying before us is still a period of great hardships. Victory will not come by itself; it can only be taken with flesh and blood. The Eighth Route and the New Fourth Armies and the people in the guerilla bases in North China vow before our fellow countrymen and anti-fascist people of the whole world that we will persist in our effort to maintain and strengthen our national unity to fight under the leadership of the Generalissimo, to overcome whatever hardship and difficulties we meet in



maintaining national unity and alliance with all anti-aggression countries. Not only will we keep our vows before we have driven back the Japanese to the east of Yalo River, we will also cooperate with the Kuomintang and all other parties and groups in building up a democratic republic in China, and cooperate with freedom-loving countries in building up a new world. At the same time we hold out our hand calling for support and aid to the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army and people in guerilla bases of North China. We are greatly in need of funds, arms and ammunition. Give us support to maintain resistance behind the enemy's lines. Without heroic struggle, without sufficient help and support, there can be no victory in resistance. Still more, without close unity and cooperation there can be no victory. On this day when the twilight of victory is within sight, we must advance with closer unity than ever before." \*

This is the spirit that dominates the Communist armies today. The Kuomintang armies have the advantage of better pay, better clothes, better arms and better quarters,—all that is necessary to make the soldier feel at ease. And yet it is only the Communist armies that can perform the 'miracles'. If reverses and defeats were suffered by other armies, the citizens of China would just shrug their shoulders and go on with the task of resistance. But the defeat of a Communist army would spell disaster for the morale of these otherwise composed and confident citizens. If the 'mop-up' campaigns really mopped up the North-West and the central occupied zones, hopes of final victories would be dashed to smithereens. The Communist armies have become the emblems of Chinese resistance; they have become the heroic legend which shapes the invincible Chinese mind.

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Who and what are the commanders of these brilliant armies? How do they behave? The experiences and observations of Anna Louise Strong are interesting :

"The Commanders in the Eighth Route Army have military records as imposing as those of any generals in China. Chu Teh was an officer in Yunnan in the days of the World War I; later he studied in Germany. He took part in the 1927 Northern Expedition which established the present Chinese Government, and later participated in the Nanchang revolt, the

seizure of Swatow, and the forming of the Red Army. Peng Teh-hwei, now assistant commander of the Eighth Route Army, was a regiment commander ten years ago in the Northern Expedition; at that time Ho Lung commanded twenty thousand men. Lin Peh-cheng was a well-known Szechwan general; Lin Piao was in those days a recent graduate of Whampoa Military Academy and led a company north. All of them since then have had ten years' experience in the Red Army.

"They each had good posts in the government army ten years ago. They gave these up to become outlaws, leaders of revolt, champions of suppressed peasants. Any of them at any time in the past ten years could have bought a high post again by betraying his convictions; none of them did. All of them lived in hardship with a price on their heads, and survived. They are still living in hardship and fighting for their convictions against Japan in the government armies.....Ten days I lived at the headquarters of the Eighth Route Army, sharing their meals and talking constantly with men and commanders. A room was found for me in the house of a local villager.....The *k'ang* on which I slept occupied three-fourths of the space and the remainder was partly filled by a metal basin of smoking charcoal which raised the temperature of the room to about forty degrees. Instead of the dinners of many dishes flavoured with hot wine, which Marshal Yen's hospitality had offered, rice was brought at mid-morning in a big five-gallon kerosene-can used both for cooking and serving. It was planked on the floor of an alcove, one side of which was open to the freezing weather. Nearby a couple of tables held a bowl of greens or turnips and a pot of weak, unsweetened tea. We helped ourselves and ate standing or sitting on scattered stools. In mid-afternoon the meal was repeated with steamed buns of wheat flour replacing the rice. Such were the two simple daily meals of five generals at a Military Conference. How sharp is the memory of those breakfasts—big, imposing Ho Lung strutting about with nonchalant grin, scholarly, bespectacled General Liu bending over the big petrol-can to dish up another bowl of rice; kindly Chu Teh sitting relaxed with bent shoulders, feet on the table rungs to lift them off the cold stones of the floor, and with a gentle, hospitable smile.....It was here.....that I learned to know and love the special characteristics of this army—characteristics rare in Chinese armies, rare anywhere in the world—that make its strength and fame.

" I would mention first the simplicity and directness of its leaders, their absence of concern for 'face'.....Next I would note sincerity and incorruptibility as illustrated by the fact that both commanders and men cut down their salaries and rations in order to enlarge the size of their army. During the time of my visit ( 1937-38 ) the Government sent supplies and pay for 45,000 men, but the army had almost doubled this number by sharing the supplies with additional recruits. Division commanders like Ho Lung got a monthly wage of five Chinese dollars; Chu Teh got six. In English money this is less than eight shillings a month, a laughable fraction of the usual pay in China for commanders.

"In the ten days of my residence among them, I noted also the depth of comradeship. There were no internal frictions, no quarreling or roughness; but this was only the negative side of the matter. I recall the happy glow that lit the faces of the men as they mentioned their commanders. I noted the way in which they carried their wounded on litters on journeys lasting many days. What other army cares thus for the common man? To the Eighth Route Army each common soldier was precious; not only his life was precious, but his initiative. For the characteristic of these leaders... was the total absence of bureaucracy, the friendship among all ranks and the development of initiative from the lowest to the highest..... I never before saw generals who train their subordinates to be just as good as themselves.... Look at Chu Teh—you don't see him give a command. He hardly seems to be running an army. He has time to talk with peasants and with foreign correspondents and with common soldiers; he has lots of time and he doesn't seem to boss." \*

And what about the commander of the New Fourth Army, General Yeh Ting, whose whereabouts are not known since the Anhwei Incident of 1941?

"A smooth-faced, vivacious, thick set Cantonese, noted for his spectacular personal courage, General Yeh marched up and down the room as he described the importance and nature of the new military force: 'Our men are old fighters, used to hardship. They are accustomed to facing tremendous odds in equipment and arms. During the past few years they have often gone without food, sometimes living for days on grass. But under all circumstances they have known how to retain

their close contact with the people. That is the secret of their survival....' The men were weather-beaten, bare-footed, and bare-kneed, and they walked past, with the swinging stride of the mountain warrior the world over. As they marched they shouted slogans or sang.

" 'One of our greatest successes', General Yeh said to me when I saw him again a year after our first interview, 'was the welding of the partisan groups into one united army. Our men had for years been fighting in small detachments which were run on a purely democratic basis. Everyone knew everyone else, plans were discussed in common, and there was practically no formal discipline. In the New Fourth Army, the partisans had to recognise different degrees of authority in people they did not know and to obey their orders. Their daily life was subject to strict military routine, something they had not been accustomed to before. Most of the men were peasants, to whom the whole conception of large-scale organisation was foreign. Among the old fighters, many were found who objected to these 'infringements of democracy.'

"To cope with this, we started a campaign of political propaganda and education throughout the army from top to bottom. Our political workers explained to every fighter that the transition from the small-scale partisan tactics of the last year of civil war to the formation of large anti-Japanese mobile armies was a progressive step in our national revolution, and that it was their revolutionary duty to adapt themselves to this new organisational form. These methods were very successful. Our discipline, is not mechanical and arbitrary. It is voluntary discipline, based on the national consciousness and class consciousness of our fighters."

"According to Yeh Ting, while 90 per cent of the officers in other Government armies originate from well-to-do and intellectual groups of the population, fully seventy per cent of the commanders and political commissars of the New Fourth Army are workers and peasants. This is the chief reason why, in the New Fourth Army, fighters and commanders find no difficulty on the same scale. Pay in the army ranges from 1.50 dollars to 5 dollars a month. All ranks receive ten cents a day for food...

"When one of its units approached a village, it did not bluster in, bristling with rifles, to demand food, shelter, and

men for labour. It avoided the tragic conflicts which arise so often in China between the fighters of her armies, who come into the village exhausted, battle-worn and hungry, and the people who lock their gates against them because their food too is limited, because it is a case of either the soldier going hungry or they themselves starving. When the New Fourth Army came to a village, it sent one man forward to talk with the people, and the man went unarmed. It promised to pay for everything it needed, and it kept its promise. When the people brought the commanders presents of pigs and chickens, they found, to their surprise, that these presents were refused. Instead, the army bought food, and invited the peasants to banquets, at which its leaders asked them if they had any complaint to make of the army's behaviour. They, the people, were the masters, and the New Fourth Army was responsible to them and acknowledged its responsibility." \*

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What were the achievements of the Red Army up to 1937? Chu Teh told Nym Wales: "The main things we have achieved, I think, are these: (1) We now have an army, which we did not have before we began the armed struggle. (2) Ten years ago, the Communist Party was not so strong as at present, because our comrades now have long and valuable experience behind them and are solid revolutionary cadres. (3) The success of the Soviet system and laws has made a deep impression among the peasants and workers of China. (4) Our struggle itself has had a great political influence on the peasants and workers, not only in China but elsewhere. (5) We still have several Soviet and partisan districts. (6) Because of the above factors, we are at present in a position favourable to the realisation of a United Front, though different from that in 1925. (7) As a whole, our Communist Party and the Chinese masses in the ten years' struggle have had a valuable collective education and experience together." \*\*

What have been the achievements, during the first five years of United Front, of the Red Army in its present character as the Eighteenth Group and the New Fourth Armies?

They have killed or wounded no less than 4,45,794 Japanese and 'puppet' officers and men; taken 68,256 prisoners; won over 42,790 puppet soldiers; captured 1,61,151 rifles, 4,276 pistols, 5,042 big and small guns of varied descriptions, 1,20,90,564

bullets and shells to fit all kinds of arms, 10,628 swords, 16,988 daggers, 3 aeroplanes. 669 gas tubes, 11 arsenals, 10,307 bicycles, 8,430 automobiles, 67 radio transmitters, 272 radio sets, 24,97,556 cattles of wire, 53,45,396 screws, 241 cameras, 26 steamers, 41,942 uniforms, 52,121 helmets, 13,080 steel helmets, 17,082 horses, 25,736 mules and donkeys, and literally hundreds of telephones and military maps.

Much more imposing is the list of sabotage and destruction—scorched earth: 175 railway trains; 9,777 *li* of railway tracks; 152 locomotives; 29,300 pieces of rails; 669 steamers and ships; 1,723 ramparts; 37 tunnels; 38 mines; 43 granaries; 66 tanks; 43 aeroplanes; 2,035 automobiles; 677 strong points; 41,202 *li* of roads; 32,46,944 telephone poles; 108 railway stations; and so on.

Add to this the fact that nearly 14,648 battles, big and small, were fought by the two armies in one year alone, 1941.

Edgar Snow estimates: "These two armies alone captured or destroyed about six per cent of all enemy artillery pieces lost, fifteen per cent of all machine guns, twenty-eight per cent of all trucks, and thirty-four per cent of all rifles. More than one-third of the enemy troops taken prisoner all over China were captured by the Eighth Route and the New Fourth Armies. Combat effectiveness increased as the armies enlarged; in 1939, they participated in nearly twenty-five per cent of all encounters recorded, local guerilla combats excluded. This percentage rose still higher in 1940, when the Japanese halted their formal advance and massed over half their troops against the guerilla areas in an attempt to complete the pacification of the conquest.

"Early in 1940, the Eighth Route commanders jointly made public a formal statement to the Government asserting that in the last two and a half years, the casualties of the Eighth Route Army have aggregated about 1,00,000 (or almost twice the size of the original combat force in Shansi), while it has inflicted more than 2,00,000 casualties against the enemy. If this statement was correct, and observers were inclined to credit it because the Eighth Route Army published day-to-day reports covering over 6,000 different engagements during the period, its combat efficiency was roughly 400 per cent better than that attained on any other front. For elsewhere, according to General Pai Tsung-hsi, Deputy Chief of Staff, the ratio of Chinese losses

was about two to one in favour of the Japanese, and in some regions averaged five to one, to the enemy's advantage." \*

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The problem of 'help' for the Communist armies has assumed huge proportions in the internal politics of China. Chu Teh has appealed for 'help' in piteous terms, not once but again and again. How much help does the Central Government render to this victorious part of its armies ?

Here are some relevant figures : "During its first three years of fighting, the Eighth Route Army received from the Military Council only 6,00,000 dollars a month (about 30,000 U. S. dollars), or the standard pay allowance for three divisions. Other armies were issued new weapons and new equipment for their replacements; the Eighth Army received only a meagre allowance of ammunition. By 1939, the monthly pay cheque was insufficient even to feed the army in the field. It could not have existed had it not become organically inseparable from the mass organisations whose freedom it defended. Chungking furnished these warriors no blankets, no winter uniforms, no shoes or socks, no doctors, nurses or medicines. In the bitter sub-zero weather many attacks were carried out by men who tramped bare-foot across the frozen hills and streams, leaving crimson stains behind them on the icy paths; wounded youths shivered in their blood-clotted jackets of cotton cloth; hundreds lost toes, fingers and ears from frost-bite. And yet, back in the security of the distant rear I sometimes heard some well-clad official say, waving a fat hand : 'The Eighth Route Army ? They do not fight. They only play hide and seek. They do not worry the Japanese. The Government should stop paying them. They use all the money for propaganda, not for resistance !' They conveniently ignored one question : How had the non-fighting Eighth Route Army managed to hold its North China base for three years, while the main Chinese Army was retreating far into the West ? Let us try to find an answer for it". \*\*

A later testimony is of D. F. Karaka, an independent Indian journalist. He writes : "Even today the reactionary element in the Kuomintang, where it has been able to prevail on the Generalissimo, has effected a virtual blockade of the Eighth Route Army, which is holding one of the fronts of China.

against the Japanese. This blockade prevents help of any kind from reaching the Eighth Route Army, and I have it on the authority of very reliable neutral parties—not Chinese—that even a consignment of medical supplies was stopped from reaching the Eighth Route Army by the present Minister of War, General Ho Ying chin. Ho Ying-chin is a Kuomintang diehard and is to the Red Army what Mr. Amery is to India. But in spite of this and in spite of the fact that some of the best-Chinese forces are virtually 'keeping guard' over their Communist brethren and thus rendering themselves unavailable for action against Japanese forces, in spite of the fact that the Eighth Route Army gets no military help from the Chinese Government in the shape of ammunition.....And that is a very remarkable fact. It is awe-inspiring to see how two such opposing forces have under such dramatic conditions come to fight side by side and shoulder to shoulder against a common enemy." \*

The Eighth Route Army Commanders made a formal appeal to the Chungking Government on February 15, 1940 : "Of the enemy's forty divisions in China, seventeen are engaged in fighting the Eighth Route and the New Fourth Armies. Thus we are occupying the attention of two-fifths of the total enemy forces... At the same time we are paid for only about one-fifth of our forces, so that each soldier and officer received an average salary of only two dollars and seventy-two cents per month."

It is against this background that the resolution dated October 10, 1939. of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party must be read :

"Within the anti-Japanese United Front the greatest dangers at present are defeatism, splitting and retrogression. All the defeatist and retrogressive tendencies at present result from the preparations for submission on the part of the wavering elements in our capitalist class. We, Communists, support Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's main policy in the preparation for our counter-offensive : 'maintain the war of resistance against defeatism'; 'maintain unity and fight against friction'; 'march forward, not backward'. Our present objective should be to maintain guerilla activities in the rear of the enemy, where political and economic reforms should be introduced to increase the power of resistance of the



people. We should strengthen our guerilla bases so that we may defeat the enemy's mopping-up campaigns and his efforts toward consolidation. At the front we should maintain our military defence, in order to prevent the enemy from being successful in any attacks. In our great rear we must quickly clear away all defeatist elements. We must destroy all retrogressive tendencies, including anti-Communist intrigues and scandals. Political reforms should be instituted to bring one-party rule to an end, by assembling a national People's Congress that really represents the people's will, and by drafting and inaugurating a constitution. This is the only way by which we can eliminate the national danger and gather sufficient strength for our counter-offensive.

"Any sort of wrong tendency or neglect of this policy is a serious mistake. At the same time, the leading cadres and all the comrades of our Party must be more alert. Organisationally, politically and ideologically, all of us should work to strengthen the Party. All of us should work to strengthen the anti-Japanese armies and the anti-Japanese political rights under the leadership of our Party, so that we may be prepared for possible crises in the national war of resistance. We must guard the Party and the nation against serious losses as the result of sudden changes in the war situation." \*

Can the Eighteenth Group and the New Fourth Armies by themselves win victory over the Japanese? Can the wily invader be driven out from Chinese soil by the Communist armies single-handed?

The Communists themselves have never had any illusions on the point. In fact their continued insistence on a closing-up of ranks, on unity of all parties and groups, is evidence of it. The Communist armies have many sparkling achievements to their credit. But final victory can only be obtained by manoeuvring warfare coordinated on the widest scale with all armies joining in, Kuomintang as well as Communist. The anti-Communist prejudices of the Chungking Central Government ministers will have to be abandoned, their attitude towards democratic forms of government must be reversed, the new military strategy initiated by the Communists must be adopted in toto, and then a coordinated offensive honestly undertaken all along the front, with every Chinese rising to the attack simultaneously, with the full fire-power of the regular armies

brought to bear on the Japanese to shatter and annihilate them, with major assistance to partisan or guerilla units everywhere, and a policy of arming of the people in the conquered territory thus alone can victory be secured.

Till then, the Communist armies can only hold up further Jap advances, and not allow them to remove a major section of the invading forces from the occupied zones. Till then, the Communist soldiers can only make hell behind and around the Japanese strongholds, and not let them rest or consolidate their gains.

The demand for Chinese unity is more fundamental for final victory than is apparent on the face of things, political or military. Without this unity, China can only bleed to death, or carry on a precarious existence on oxygen supplied by the British and the American Governments. Death may be slow, but it is certainly beyond doubt.

## CHAPTER VII

### WOMEN WHO FIGHT

When the Red Armies made the Long March, there were no braver warriors in their ranks than the Communist women who marched shoulder to shoulder with the toughest men. A whole long year they marched, over hills and dales and across turbulent rivers more stormy than the roughest seas. They carried all their belongings on their backs, and they participated in the battles that had to be fought all along the route. Eight babies were born on the Long March, one of them, a girl, to Madame Mao Tse-tung. Four in all had to be left on the way with farmers' families who promised to look after them. Mao's daughter was one of them. The mothers had continued the march; the cause was greater than the personal feelings of individuals.

Madame Mao Tse-tung was a peasant girl before she joined the Red Army. She still prefers to be known by her own name: 'Commander Ho Tze-chun.' Delicate and slightly built, she had worn the Red Army uniform for ten years, fought in different battles; organised groups of women fighters, nursed the wounded and the sick, and carried on her frail shoulders full-grown men to field hospitals. That was already her record when she met Anna Louise Strong some five years ago.

"She started on the Long March with twenty recent wounds from shrapnel in her body, eight of which were serious; she was also pregnant at the time and bore a child on the way. She was forced to leave her child behind with a peasant family and has never since been able to find it. Yet all these bitter experiences have not dimmed her spirit or the youth of her twenty-eight years." \*

Madame Chu Teh—Kang Ke-ch'ing—had been a cow-herd and a kitchen slave sold to a feudal landlord family before she met the Communists. It was in 1927 that she ran away to become organiser of the Women Vanguard, and was commander of three thousand armed women in her own right when she met Chu Teh in 1928. To her credit is the defeat and disarming of

a whole brigade of Szechwan troops, with no more than two battalions of her Women Vanguards at her disposal, during the Long March. When she joined the Red Army she did not know how to read or write. By 1939 she had qualified as a teacher of political science in the Yen-an Military University at the age of twenty-six. "I like babies as an institution, but don't want any myself. I have to keep fit for my work in the army," she replied to Edgar Snow when he questioned her about motherhood.

Madame Chou En-lai-Tang Ying-chao—was a village school mistress in her pre-Red Army days. When the Long March began she was an invalid in bed, with tuberculosis. For the first four months she had to be carried on an improvised stretcher. The rest of the way she walked. She has herself related the story: "As soon as we halted and put down the knapsacks, we women would hold meetings among the people, telling them that the Japanese were invading the country, and that the Red Army was going to the North-West to fight Japan. We also helped the local people to arrest corrupt and grafting gentry and investigate their crimes. The hardest work was the Red Cross. The men who carried the wounded were not able to keep on with the rest. We left Kiangsi with transport units, but in Kweichow we had to hire local coolies, who sometimes deserted. Then the women had to carry the stretchers, which was very difficult. Nearly one hundred children of ten years of age and under went on the Long March. All of them depended on their own legs for transport and carried their own belongings. They also took part in dramatics and singing as part of their contribution. Some of them became too weak and remained behind in various places. Others came all the way through and are now very active in the Eighth Route Army....." \*

Anna Louise Strong asked Tang Ying-chao how she managed to get rid of her tuberculosis on that terrible journey of 20,000 li. She answered: "I think it was happiness that cured me." When asked whether she had not suffered from lack of food, she replied calmly: "Very often. In the grasslands we were ten days or more with nothing to eat but grass. In Kweichow we were able to pick rice from the fields, but bandits had stolen our utensils and we had nothing in which to cook it. Yes, we were often hungry." "Why then were you so

happy?" "Because we had a bright hopeful future before us. We were all together and knew that we had chosen the correct path, and that we could overcome all difficulties. There were also many new things to see and hear." "Are you as happy now as you were then?" She considered carefully for a moment and then answered; "More so, I think, for things are even more hopeful now." \*

Edgar Snow records a thrilling experience. Tientsin was already in Japanese hands. "It was dark when the train entered Tientsin. I waited for Tang Ying-chao and we had a bad moment passing through the Japanese guards at the station. Or rather I had. Visibly at least, Ying-chao was not at all perturbed. She dropped her jaw in an imbecile attitude and grinned happily at the sullen Japanese sentries, who after giving her a cursory examination and spilling the contents of her straw luggage on the floor, made grunting noises indicating that we could proceed. As we walked down the station platform we saw a dozen young Chinese boys and girls yanked out of line and hurried off to waiting military trucks. Their peasant garb, in contrast with the soft white hands of intellectuals, had aroused Japanese suspicions. I did not breathe easily until we were across the barbed-wire barrier in the British Concession, and what was in those days still safety..... Through a friend I arranged for Ying-chao to play *amah* again, to a gentleman she never saw, and she got a deck passage as far as Tsingtao, whence she could travel overland by railways still in Chinese hands..... When I next saw Tang Ying-chao with Chou En-lai again in Hankow, she was still a servant, but of her own people, as chairman-delegate of the combined women's organisations of the North-West." \*\*

Of such stuff are the Communist women made, women who fought and marched shoulder to shoulder with the men of the Red Army. They are today the pivots of women's organisations in Yen-an.

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And what is the nature of the problem they face ?

The Japanese soldier is a special menace to the Chinese women, apart from the looting and the burning that he indulges in.

"Rape and compulsory prostitution are very widespread, and many Chinese women are taken for the use of Japanese

soldiers. From the county of So-hsien alone they took three thousand women to send to their camps. They are exceptionally brutal towards any local villagers who try to protect their women. For instance, three Japanese soldiers came to a large village near Lin-cheng and violated the wife, sister and sister-in-law of a certain farmer. The latter aroused the neighbours and killed the three soldiers. In retaliation, the Japanese sent a large force which massacred the entire population and burned the village. The farmer who had killed the three soldiers was hung on a tree by a hook through his body and disembowelled while alive" \*

The 'distinguished' purdah lady of the city upper classes is no more a painted doll decked out in clothes of variegated colours. The delicate lady with the dainty hands and daintier feet—the admiration and delight of Chinese painters for generations—faces today a grim present, a present of bestiality inhuman cruelty and fiendish crime. The sadistically inclined Japanese play havoc with her sex. Not only has she been torn from her old moorings, her family life destroyed, smoked out of her home, on strange roads for days and months to flee from the invading terror; the women face danger every minute in occupied territory. In 'free' China, she faces problems of refugee families, a society adjusting itself to new surroundings with new values. The War has been a source of freedom to her, as also of terrifying experience.

How have the Communists tackled the problem of the uplift of women in the North-West ?

Confucius had laid down the law: "Women are human, but lower than men. It is the law of nature that woman should not be allowed any will of her own." This was the traditional attitude of the average orthodox Chinese towards women. The Communists proclaimed a revolt against Confucianism from the very beginning. Wherever the Communists went, emancipation of women and equality for women were the chief reforms they enforced.

An age-old proverb in China is: "Ignorance is the best ornament of a woman." The Communists take the initiative in countering it by educational methods which are definitely revolutionary for slow-moving China. Stowed away in the loess uplands of once conservative Shensi, we come across the

Nu Tzu Ta Hsueh, a Women's University, organised and run by the Communists. For some two thousand years, life in Yen-an and the hinterland of the North-West had been static; it was the wife's privilege to be beaten by the husband, women were meant to be kitchen-slaves, farm-hands and generally beasts of burden for odd purposes about the mud huts of the farmers.

To this Yen-an now come women from many cities and villages, in search of peace and safety from the rapacious Japanese soldiers. Women, forced by the new situation, the altered circumstances, penniless, driven from their homes with barely the clothes on their backs—women, who have seen death and disease claim their near and dear ones in the most gruesome manner—women who have slept on the roads, in the strange way-side temples, and begged for food and lived on crumbs for bare existence—women on whose shoulders now falls the burden of families, of young children and old parents: to these women of the cities and villages have come a new awakening, new ideas, new abilities, new strength to shape a new China with new values. 'Mobilisation of women' is proceeding apace. It may not be all smooth-sailing. Prejudices, with the load of traditional centuries, take time to shuffle their feet. But in the Border Region today, very conscious and deliberate spade work is yielding surprising results.

Soong Ching-ling—Madame Sun Yat-sen—has estimated the work in the North-West. She is the most respected woman worker of China today.

"The women's work in the North-West, and in the new guerilla bases behind the Japanese lines needs stressing because, although the Advisory Committee (presided over by Madame Chiang Kai-shek) rendered extremely important auxiliary service, it was only in the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia, Shansi-Hopei-Chahar and other 'border areas', that a true women's MOVEMENT was created, carrying on the great tradition of 1925 7. Here the women organised into associations numbered not thousands, but hundreds of thousands, and their functions did not deal only with relief, but involved full participation in the war, and in political and economic self-rule. The organisers of the Eighth Route

Army came to some of the most backward regions of China, devitalised by long misrule and shaken further by periods of Japanese occupation. In large sections of Shensi and Shansi provinces, women still had their feet bound. Illiteracy was ninety-five percent or higher. Oppressed and embittered husbands made up for the hopelessness of existence by exercising boundless tyranny over their wives, and girl babies were sold or killed almost as a matter of course. The very sight of the uniformed organisers, these strange and terrible free-striding 'girl soldiers' frightened the local women indoors. They had to be approached carefully, first only with offers to help with their washing and their baby-minding, and with suggestions for better methods of doing these things. They had to be encouraged to talk about their lives, to be told of their rights in relation to their men, to be given a sense of their worth, and their own importance—then to be helped into fighting with their families for the few hours needed to attend meetings and receive education, then to be entrusted with responsibilities. And the results of this patient and painstaking labour? Today, women in the Border Areas have become real people and real fighters, not only matching but often outdistancing the men. The system of democratic self rule has placed women on administrative committees, put there by the votes of their fellow-villagers of both sexes, and it is not uncommon to find women district magistrates, mayors of townships, and heads of villages. In North Shansi alone, women hold two thousand elective positions in local administration. Women's organisations are responsible for livestock raising, for the weaving of uniforms, for the care of wounded and children, aid to soldiers' families, control of travellers, and when the men are away fighting, the farm work of their villages as well. In many cases they have brought traitors to book, done intelligence work among the enemy, guarded wells and cross-roads, and performed other functions of military value. No one who comes back from these areas fails to tell of the part played by women in every phase of life, of how in the midst of the war, they have moved from the darkness of the feudal past to a position which, for their sisters in the rest of China, lies only in the future..... Ting Ling's North West Woman's Battlefields Service Group—the most versatile of all—carried on every conceivable type of educational and agitational work. It drew posters, composed and acted its own plays, initiated production and recruiting campaigns, organised the people for specific tasks,



and was in almost every way an example of what such a unit should be." \*

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Let us meet the pioneer women of the Nu Ta in Yen-an.

The Women's University, or Nu Tzu Ta Hsueh,—the 'College of Amazons' as Edgar Snow calls it, is situated in the folds of the hills in Yen-an. Two hill-sides are riddled with some two hundred *yao-feng*—cave-houses—connected by intercommunicating passages, well spaced highways, and circling steps which lead down to the river in the valley below.

"The *yao-feng* is not a dark, damp and dingy place at all. It is warm in winter and definitely cool in summer, and provides a perfectly comfortable dwelling."

It has cost the Government of the Border Region some ten thousand dollars (Chinese) to get the class-rooms, dormitories, etc., excavated and provided with the simple requirements of the college. White plaster, a product of Yen-an experiments, helps to light the interior. The floors are paved with bricks. The opening is partially covered by rice-paper windows, which admit ultra-violet rays.

The Japanese bombs can neither penetrate nor destroy these *yao-feng*, with their loess roof of thirty to forty feet thickness. As to the chance of a direct hit at the cave entrance, passage-ways in the rear of the dwellings secure protection against concussion as well as flying splinters.

Four hundred Amazons have gathered here—women of all ages and from all provinces of China. Shantung, Honan, Hopei, Shansi, Kiangsu, Szechwan, Shensi, Kwangtung, Hunan, Hupeh, Manchuria, as well as Chinghai and Shikiang, are well represented. They have arrived by long circuitous routes, helped along by guerillas, trekking on foot anything between a hundred and five hundred miles, to have the privilege of being trained in the famous Nu Ta. They have braved the danger of falling into the hands of the Japanese or of the anti-Communist war-lords, and the torture and humiliation that would surely entail. Nearly two hundred and fifty of them are no older than twenty years of age, and most of the rest are between twenty and thirty.

The curriculum ranges from the care and bringing-up of children, spinning, growing their own food on the surrounding

hill-sides, to the learning of foreign languages, like English and Russian.

All of them are certainly not Communists. But they are daughters of workers or peasants, some of middle-class families, with only a dozen or two from rich classes. The educational qualifications which they bring with them are varied in the extreme. More than two hundred have only attended primary schools, about a hundred and twenty have got as far as the middle school, and only forty have crossed the threshold of any university.

Kuo Chin, the smart, prim secretary of the Nu Ta, told Edgar Snow: "We have three classes of students. Several could not read or write when they arrived. We put them, and others with only primary school education, in a special class where they study the Chinese language, social problems, hygiene, political and military 'common sense', and a brief history of the Communist Party. After a year some will be promoted to the secondary class. This has courses in social history, political economy, problems of the Chinese Communist Party, the Three People's Principles, military problems, elementary philosophy and problems in public health. There is a higher research class. University education, or its equivalent, or completion of two years of training in our special and secondary classes are entrance requirements. Higher research students take political economy, Marxism and Leninism, philosophy, history of the world revolution, and one foreign language. Here we train leaders for special tasks in war work or in some existing institution for political work in the occupied areas, teaching, medical work, propaganda, co-operative organisation, and so on. We offer optional courses in English, Russian and Japanese, in literature and music, and in book-keeping, shorthand, journalism and weaving and spinning. All the three classes jointly attend lectures on Chinese social problems and the women's movement." \*

The idea behind the curriculum is that an intensely practical point of view is to be constantly kept in mind. The University is to subserve war aims, to give 'emergency education'. Pure literary pursuits, education for education's sake, propagation of what passes muster as 'culture', are all ruled out with a heavy hand.

"Of course it was nothing less than an earthquake in the lives of North Shensi people to have a school of any kind for

*women.* Before the Reds entered this area they were still hired out as 'labour', like donkeys and mares, while the males stayed home and collected their wages..... Needless to say, this education differed radically from anything offered elsewhere in China. None of the courses corresponded in content to teaching in Kuomintang or Christian schools, which put little emphasis on vocational or military training, and naturally none at all on Marxism !..... In the Women's University, all courses were salted with Marxist philosophy, including the Communists' own interpretation of the Three Principles". \*

At the Nu Ta living is very simple. Every morning at dawn the students go out into the fields for two hours and grow their own vegetables and cereals. The heads of faculties and the seventy teachers are paid not more than five dollars (Chinese) per month. There are no fees for boarding, lodging or tuition. Even books are supplied free. The students only provide their own bedding and uniforms. Incidentally, the same uniform is worn by the teachers as by the students, made of plain cotton cloth, with cloth-shoes or straw sandals, and army beret. Rouge, powder and lip-stick are not in evidence, but bobbed hair is.

"They had the ready smile you see in working class people anywhere in China, without which the country would be as intolerable to most foreigners as an eternally overcast sky." \*\*

They wash their own clothes and take cleaning and other duties by turns. They lead a communal life, the expenses per student being no more than seven and a half dollars (Chinese) per month. They eat simple vegetarian meals cooked in the students' co-operative restaurant.

"In Nu Ta, one-third of the students are married. The Principal is herself a married woman. Two well-lighted caves are given over to the babies. Student mothers take turns in caring for their own babies and those of their school-mates, while the rest study and work. The children are in individual beds and are scientifically cared for. The school gives help but the mothers must take responsibility for their own children. The Government supports both the students and the babies, but the babies are in no way considered nationalised. Family life seemed natural and happy at Yen-an." \*\*\*

There is now a long waiting-list for admission to the Nu Ta. The accommodation was limited to four hundred in 1941, but it was hoped to expand it to a thousand the next year. There are no special requirements for admission purposes except "sound health, a co-operative spirit, and a readiness to fight in the national struggle for emancipation of women". Women engaged in anti-Japanese work or from the military and political schools organised in occupied territories are given first preference. Working-class and peasant women follow next.

The administration office and the co-operative buildings are guarded by girl sentries armed with rifles and bayonets, and admission is strictly controlled. A high wall surrounds the buildings. The social life of the students is on a planned basis. Games and sports are a part of the daily regimen. Playgrounds and basket-ball courts, riding-circle and drill grounds, are all well laid-out in the valley. The girls have their own theatre, where they put up their regular shows and take training.

Careful statistics show that most of the girls who qualify from the Nu Ta join in rural uplift work or become prominent activists in the mass organisations in occupied territory. Their chief role is mobilisation work, as well as education and organisation of the peasants for aiding the partisans and the guerilla units, and helping to keep the civilian morale at the requisite pitch. They have been taught the use of weapons, and there are records to show the brilliant leadership the girls have supplied in actual partisan warfare. Some of the graduates proceed to the Yen-an Resistance University, the K'ang Ta, for further specialisation in military training.

"Every traveller in China can tell how much, even in their still backward state, the vast majority of women whom the wave of emancipation has not touched are doing for the common effort. The Burma Road and the great North-West Highway to the Soviet Union, those two heroic break-throughs of fighting China to the outside world after the Japanese had blockaded her by sea, were largely built by the labour of women. The Kwangtung trade route which, dodging the blockade for more than a year, secretly moved far more goods each week than the Burma Road could manage in a month, was composed of endless lines of sturdy Hakka woman porters, cheerfully carrying hundred-pound loads in thirty mile stages.

"And women have not only worked but fought. I know personally of an instance in which the female population of a village in Hainan Island fought off a small Japanese landing made when their menfolk were away. They had only farm implements to fight with, and many were killed, but the enemy force was compelled to re-embark. Similar happenings must have occurred in a great many places throughout the country—unheralded and unknown. As for individual cases, there is a story in almost every district of some girl who, emulating Mu Lan of old changed into men's clothing and fought in the army.

"The fighting record of our women does not permit us to believe that they will ever again allow themselves to be enslaved either by a national enemy or by social reaction at home. Only an extension of democracy, including the rights of women, can bring real victory in this war. And such a victory, won by the united efforts of the people, will leave no room for any scheme of things other than democracy." \*

Thus the heritage of the Nu Ta spreads, and envelopes the whole of China.

Lieutenant Uhlmann, a French Vice-Consul at Mukden and Peiping, now with the Fighting French Forces, who returned via Yenan a few months ago, declared: "No Chinese woman in this area will ever marry a man or have intimate relations with him unless he is really in love with her and she really loves him. They take this very seriously, and although women have complete freedom, there are very rare cases of broken marriages and separation because of this."

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"The sincerity with which the Communists sacrifice all personal inclinations and bury all past rancour in the interests of the 'national anti-Japanese front' is beyond question. Thousands of them have seen family and friends wiped out in the ten years of war with Chiang Kai-shek, yet now they loyally support his government. When I met Ting Ling, the famous woman writer, I was surprised to find her still alive. Many years before she had disappeared into a Nanking jail with her husband, and he was known to have been killed there. Yet when I asked her, after our discussion of her new dramatic troupe, to tell me something of her personal history and 'how she came alive' after being reported dead, she answered, after a moment's hesitation: 'Since we are now on a united front with

the Government I would rather not discuss my prison experiences.' The Communists have many bitter memories to bury, but they have resolutely buried them for the sake of China." \*

And Ting Ling is neither the first nor the last Communist to refuse to discuss or think of the civil war days and the sufferings they entailed at the hands of the Kuomintang itself. And Chinese Communist women are the braver soldiers in this respect, because they suffered even more than the men, if that is possible.

## CHAPTER VIII

### MA, THE MUSLIM

In the North-West there is a saying: "Every nine Muslims out of ten are Ma, and the one who is not a Ma, must surely be a Ha."

The word Ma means horse, and a very turbulent horse he is. He has a history of repeated revolts to his credit.

"The Mohammedans of China are said to number about 2,00,00,000, and of these at least half are now concentrated in the provinces of Shensi, Kansu, Ninghsia, Szechwan, and Sinkiang. In many districts—particularly in Kansu and Chinghai—they are a majority, and in some very big areas they outnumber the Chinese as much as ten to one. Generally their religious orthodoxy seems to vary according to their strength of numbers in a given spot, but in the dominantly Mohammedan region of Northern Kansu and southern Ninghsia the atmosphere is distinctly that of an Islamic country." \*

These Mohammedans trace their establishment in China as far back as 651 A. D., some 1300 years ago, after the visit of an uncle of the Prophet Mohammed. They have been considered as 'border tribes' by the Chinese for ages. There are mainly three distinct trends: the Mongol Hui, who live round about Hochow and Linhsia; the Ch'an Hui or Turbaned Muslims of Chinese Turkestan; and the Salar Hui of Chinghai.

Their history is interesting.

"When the Republic came to birth in 1911, the first Republican flag bore the design of five different-coloured bars, symbolising the five main races of which the present Chinese population is composed: the Han—the 'Chinese proper'—the Man (Manchurians), the Meng (Mongols), the Hui (Mohammedans), the Tsang (Tibetan). The homes of the last four bordered those of the ancient Han and are what we now call Northern Manchuria, Sinkiang and Tibet. When they were strong they quarrelled with the Chinese and pillaged their towns: when they were weaker, they negotiated and traded with them. But strong or weak, willing or unwilling, they all inherited the

Chinese civilisation.....The Hui are of three racial types and are differentiated into Ch'an Hui, Han Hui and Kazaks. The Ch'an or Turbaned Hui, so-called from the head-dress of their men—a cap beautifully embroidered in gold thread and in winter bordered with sable or other fur—live to the West of Sinkiang province, centred in the town of Kashgar. They seem to be of a very different origin from the inhabitants of China proper. In the districts where they live, there are very few Chinese, and the usual accompaniments of 'Chinese' life—the wine shops, the characteristic groceries, the pig markets, and so on, are 'nowhere to be found'. The Han Hui (Chinese Hui), on the other hand, had probably migrated at some time from the Chinese province of Kansu. They live in the Chinese manner, and can speak the language, though their natural language is Arabic. Like their 'turbaned' kinsmen, they are faithful worshippers of Mahomet; they are honest and reliable in business, and self-respecting members of a well organised community. The Kazaks are nomads, coming from the stock of the Kirghiz people. They live chiefly in the Altai mountains.....All three branches of Hui have a mixed origin, though they are mainly of Turkish extraction. The name 'Hui' was given to them by the Chinese because of their relations with a branch of the ancient Uigurs, called by them Hui-he. The Hui-he established a kingdom in Central Asia during the ninth and tenth centuries and were converted to Mohammedanism. They sent expeditions to Sinkiang, to their fellow tribesmen who had remained there, and these too became followers of Mahomet. The Chinese then began to call Mohammedanism the 'Hui religion', and those who practised it in Sinkiang, 'the Hui People.' \*

The biggest problem that faces the Hui's, not today, but for centuries is whether they can claim a separate nationhood from the Chinese. The claim of the Chinese is that they have been sinicized, and form merely a "religious minority" and not a "national minority".

A typical example of the Central Government attitude is the following :

"The longer I stay in China's northwest, the less I know what people mean when they talk about the Chinese 'Mohammedan race'. To begin with, a large number of Muslims in China are converted Chinese. After one big massacre all of the non-



Mohammedan Chinese that were left alive over a whole district adopted Islam. We have even come across several Mohammedan families by the name of Kung—that is, descendants of Confucius. Since Chinese Buddhists do not become Indians, and neither are followers of Jesus considered Jews anywhere in the world, why should Chinese Muslims become any the less Chinese? To be sure, there are Muslims in China who are different racially from ordinary Chinese. We have long heard of the Ch'an Hui, or Turbaned Muslims of Chinese Turkestan; the Salar Hui of Chinghai are also well known, and here in Hoochow we come across the Mongol Hui. These different racial groups and many other minor ones that make up the so-called 'Chinese Mohammedan race' are probably no more closely related to one another than are the Germans and English. And the insistence that there is a racial unity among Chinese Mohammedans, with the insinuating suggestion that this unity might well serve as the foundation for an independent political organisation is understandable only as coming from the spokesman of the Japanese military. It is true that the Muslim religion, through its vigorous discipline over the daily life of its adherents, and, might we suggest, through its policy of keeping them in ignorance as far as possible, has brought about a high degree of psychological unity and sense of group dependence. But after all, the problem of Chinese Muslims is a problem of religion and culture plus a belated and passing phase of military feudalism; and to discuss it from the angle of racial minorities is certainly misleading.....Industry and frugality and a keen business sense seem to be among the strong characteristics of the Muslims. Miserliness is often carried beyond reasonable bounds, and usury is pursued to the extreme. One soon becomes aware of a group solidarity and a dare-devil pluck that are not commonly found among other Chinese communities. Education, however, is particularly backward; illiteracy is almost universal. The clergy make it their business to see to it that none of the children of their congregation go to the ordinary Chinese school, and instead organise classes of their own, in which even little tots are taught the Arabic alphabet written on the hip bone of the sheep. For decades the effort on both the Mohammedan and non-Mohammedan side seems to have been toward separation and segregation. Mutual ignorance and suspicion, plus economic pressure and hardship, prepare the stage for 'uprisings' which may result from almost any minor irritation." \*

There seem to be "Akhand China-wallas", as we have the "Akhand Hindustan-wallas" in India. The line of reasoning is about the same.

And yet, it is not denied, nor can it be denied by anybody, that the Chinese Muslims have refused to be swallowed up in the China Sea, even though much of the old Turkish culture has been modified by Chinese law and the corroding influence of Chinese customs. For hundreds of years they have lived side by side with them. Muslims have married Chinese and Chinese, Muslims.

"Chinese influence is very marked, Muslims dress like Chinese (except for round white caps or ceremonial fezes worn by the men and white turbans by the women), all speak Chinese as the language of daily life (although many know a few words from the Koran) and, while markedly Turkish features are not infrequent among them, the physiognomy of the majority is hardly distinguishable from the Chinese with whom they have for centuries intermarried. Owing to their law that any Chinese who marries a Mohammedan must not only adopt the faith, but also be adopted into a Mohammedan family, cutting away from his or her own kinsmen, the children of these mixed marriages tend to grow up regarding themselves as a species quite different from their Chinese relatives.....It may, in fact, be said that the Mohammedans are the largest people left in China among whom priest and bishop are the real arbiters of temporal as well as spiritual life, with religion a deciding factor in their culture, politics and economy. Mohammedan society revolves around the *men-huang* and the *ahun* (ameer and mullah) and their knowledge of the Koran and of Turkish or Arabic (scant as it usually is) are the mechanisms of magic and authority. Mohammedans in the North-West pray daily in the hundreds of well-kept mosques, observe Mohammedan feast days, fast days, and marriage and funeral ceremonies, reject pork, and are offended by the presence of pigs or dogs. The pilgrimage to Mecca is an ambition of all, and is frequently realised by rich men and *ahuns*, who thereby strengthen their political and economic power. To most of them Turkey, not China, seems to be still the fatherland, and pan-Islamism rather than pan-Hanism the ideal." \*

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There are three religious schools amongst the Chinese Muslims of the North-West, the Old, the New, and the *Hsin-*

*hsin-chiao*, the 'new-new faith', or the Modern. The Hsin-hsin-chiao is called the heretical school because it advocates the abolition of most ceremonies and customs of Islam, and declares its appreciation of modern science with rationalism as its base. It is a revolt against the clergy, with the "men-huang" as their leader. The group of Wu-ma, 'the five Ma's',—Ma Hung-kuei, Ma Hung-ping, Ma Pu-fang, Ma Pu-ching, and Ma Chung-ying—supported the modern school, and as the generals have been stolid supporters of the Kuomintang, the modern school itself has been labelled "Pan-Han". The whole bureaucracy, the landed gentry and the 'cattle barons' all support the generals; as also do the modern school, especially since the Communists arrived in the North-West with their 'dangerous' doctrine of Socialism.

The area under the domination of the Ma's was governed in the best feudal style. For instance, there were taxes on land irrigation, merchants, middle-men, food, tobacco, wine, vegetables, special foods, wood, coal, skins, salt-carrying, salt-consumption, portorage, camels, sheep, domestic animals, pigeons, slaughter, mill-stones, milling, scales, houses, ceremonies, marriage, stamp, boats, and a host of others. Every single article of use had to pay a share to the feudal lord. Salt was a monopoly, and every person was bound to purchase half a pound every month. Re-selling was prohibited, with punishment ranging from whipping to execution. And the taxes were not light either. On the sale of a bushel of wheat, you paid forty cents, to sell a sheep or cattle thirty per cent of the price, to own a sheep twenty-five cents, to kill a pig a hundred cents.

This was not all. "Probably the most fiercely resented measure was General Ma's conscription. He had a total of about 40,000 troops, and an indefinite number of 'gate guards' who policed the many walled towns and cities. Nearly all were conscripts. Every family with sons had to contribute, or hire a substitute, at a cost which had risen to about 150 dollars. The poor could borrow the sum—at rates from 40 per cent to 60 per cent annually—from a pawnshop usually owned by one of the Ma's. Not only did the soldiers get no pay; they had to furnish their own food, and clothing. Ma was evidently wasting no money except on brides.....' Life is too bitter for us Hui-min under Ma Hung-kuei. No family is secure. If a family has two sons, one of them must join his army. If it has three sons, two must join.

There is no escape—unless you are rich and can pay the tax for a substitute. What poor man can afford it? Not only that, but every man must bring his own clothes, and his family must pay for his food, fires, and lighting. This costs several tens of dollars a year'.....Excessive taxation and indebtedness had forced many farmers to sell all their cattle and abandon their lands. Great areas had been bought over by officials, tax-collectors, and lenders at very cheap rates, but much of it remained wasteland... In one district investigated it was found that over 70 per cent of the farmers were in debt, and about 60 per cent were living on food bought on credit. In the same district five per cent of the people owned from 100 to 200 *mou* of land each, 20 to 50 camels, 20 to 40 cows, 5 to 10 horses, 5 to 10 carts, and had from 1000 to 2000 dollars in trading capital, while at the same time about 60 per cent of the population had less than fifteen *mou* of land, no livestock other than one or two donkeys, and an average indebtedness of 35 dollars and 366 pounds of grain—much more than the average value of their land." \*

In this seething inferno arrived the Communists after their Long March. They found that General Ma was negotiating with the Japanese, a Japanese Military Mission had been established in Ninghsia city, permission for building an aerodrome had already been given to them.

The Communists drafted a manifesto to the Muslim nation. It promised that the Red Army would prohibit conscription, abolish all taxes, cancel all debts and loans, guarantee freedom of religion to all, protect and nourish Islamic culture, aid in creating as well as arming an anti-Japanese Muslim army, as also an autonomous Muslim Government. It further laid stress on the fact that the Muslim nation would not be coerced by the Chinese, and that the Communists would help in uniting the Muslims of China, Outer Mongolia, Chinese Turkestan or Sinkiang.

In return for all this they asked that the Japanese should be ejected, the cruel and rapacious Ma should be overthrown, and full cooperation should be given to the Red Army.

The Communists issued 'rules of conduct' for Red Army men posted in the Muslim districts. "These decreed that Red soldiers must not enter the home of a Muslim without his consent; molest a mosque or a priest in any way; say 'pig' or 'dog'

before Muslims, or ask them why they don't eat pork; or call the Muslims 'small faith' and the Chinese 'big faith' ..... Besides these efforts to unite the whole army intelligently behind the Muslim policy of the Reds, there was incessant work with the peasantry. The two Muslim training regiments led in this propaganda, but companies in the Red Army also sent their propaganda corps from house to house, explaining Communist policies and urging the farmers to organise; the army dramatic clubs toured the villages giving Mohammedan plays based on local situations and incidents of history, and designed to 'agitate' the population; leaflets, newspapers and posters were distributed, written in Chinese and Arabic; and mass meetings were frequently called to form revolutionary committees and village Soviets... By July (1936) several dozen Mohammedan communities in Ninghsia had elected village Soviets and were sending delegates to Yu Wang Pao to confer with the Muslim Communists there.... Early in September enough progress had been made in Ninghsia to convene a meeting of over 300 Muslim delegates from Soviet committees elected by the villages then under the Red Army ... The meeting of delegates elected a chairman and a provisional Muslim Soviet Government Committee. They passed resolutions to co-operate with the Red Army and accept its offer to help create an anti-Japanese Mohammedan Army, and to begin at once the organisation of a Chinese-Muslim Unity League, a Poor People's League, and a mass anti-Japanese society." \*

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After the Sian Incident and the formation of the special Border District in Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia, the ten-point programme of the Communist Party for resisting the Japanese and for national salvation has been systematically implemented by the Communists. The third item declares : " Except for traitors, all the people shall have freedom of speech, press and assembly, and the right to arm themselves against the Japanese aggressors; we shall abolish all old laws which restrain the patriotic movement of the people, and enact new laws instead; we shall release all patriotic and revolutionary political prisoners; lift the ban on party activities; the people of the whole nation shall be mobilised and armed to participate in the war of resistance, so that the people may acquit themselves to the best of their ability. *We shall mobilise the Mohammedans, Mongolians and other national minorities to resist the Japanese jointly with us.*

*under the Principle of National self-determination and self-Government.*" \*

There is no clash between the Muslims and the Communists inside the Special Border District and the other Border Regions, nor is there the old feeling of estrangement between the Han and the Hui, the Chinese and the Muslim. The old distrust has been liquidated by the honest implementing of promises made to the Muslims, and an essentially fair, honest and just government on a 'people's democracy' basis. The Muslim co-operates with the Chinese unreservedly, and the one thought in the minds of both is the devising of the quickest and the most efficient method of implementing the Three People's Principles.

At Yen-an, by the end of 1940, was established an Institute of National Minorities, directed by Comrade Lo Man, who is in charge of the Department for National Minorities of the N.W. Bureau of the Communist Party of China. All minorities are represented among the odd five hundred students of both sexes, Muslims, Tibetans, Mongolians, Manchurians, as well as the aborigines, the Lolos and the Miaos. The Institute is accommodated in some two hundred caves, and provides separate kitchens and special dietary to suit the peculiarities of each nation. The curriculum is divided into two sections: the Cultural and the Politico-Social. In the former, subjects like history, geography, mathematics, elementary science, and languages, are taught; in the latter, Marxism with special emphasis on the national question, the theory and practice of the Chinese revolution, etc., are tackled. The medium of instruction is the language of the nationality being instructed. Cultural traditions are closely studied and respected, cultural values preserved and encouraged for ultimate utilisation in the struggle against the invader. Any morning, for example, one can hear the strains of Mongolian songs and rehearsals of the Manchurian Dramatic clubs, as the Muezzin is calling the faithful for prayers to the Muslim Mosque attached to the Institute. The curriculum spreads over a two-years' course. The only condition for admission is the plighted word of the student that he will go back to his homeland after graduation and further the anti-fascist struggle.

Meanwhile the policy of the Kuomintang remains the same as of old. It refuses to accept the Muslims as a nation with the right of self-determination. It bolsters up the mosque.

burning General Ma. It surrounds the special District of Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia with its best troops, including three of the Ma Generals. "North of the Great Wall were Chiang Kai-shek's anti-Red generals, Fu Tso-yi, Kao Kuei-tze and others. To the West, in Ninghsia, were the Moslem troops of the three Ma generals..... Reinforcing the Moslems in Kansu and Shensi, and elsewhere surrounding the Chinese Reds, were the best-equipped of all the Chinese forces, the First Group Army of General Hu Tsung-nan..... The only motor highway system connecting the North-West with Sinkiang was closely patrolled by Chungking's gendarmes, and the only roads leading into the Communist areas were likewise guarded continuously....." \*

This is the story of 'Ma', the Muslim, in the Communist Special Border District.

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The position of all minority nationalities is fully safeguarded.

"It was only by proving themselves democratic in action that the democratic governments in North China could rally the full support of the people. Freedom of religious beliefs was a practical question in North China, where more than in any other place in China, a great diversity of religious beliefs is to be found. In the Wutai area and near Suiyuan, the lamas are very important in the social life of the people. In Hopei, Mohammedanism is deeply rooted. In the centres of communication are both protestant and catholic missions—the latter extending far into the more remote villages of the interior—with their hospitals and churches. People believing in Buddhism and Taoism are even more common. Today all these groups live harmoniously under the leadership of the government in the common fight against Japan.

"It is clearly stated in the programmes of the regional governments, that the religious beliefs of the people must be respected.

"In 1937, when the Eighth Route Army was operating in the Wutai area, the lamas gave it food and shelter.

"In 1938, a monastery with 500 monks in Kaoping hsien, south-eastern Shansi, was burnt down by the Japanese. The monks were killed without a single survivor. The temple and its Buddhas were covered with blood. The monks of other near

by temples and monasteries asked the Eighth Route Army for advice. Eighth Route armed them and they served as a part-time self-defence corps. The Eighth Route Army also sent political workers to help them to organise. Their religious ceremonies remained. Wherever the 18th Group Army goes, it abides by its rule not to interfere with worship or violate the images of the Buddhas in the temples.

"In Central Hopei, there is a famous armed detachment called the Mohammedan Detachment. When the Japanese occupied Ting hsien and Muslim centres along the upper section of the Peiping-Hankow Railway, they aroused the militant Muslims to fury. They came out in the dark night to kill the few Japanese sentinels, and, with nothing but their muscles to help them, lifted trucks and artillery clear off the ground, and carried them into hiding. The Japanese had great trouble in managing the people. Exasperated, they subjected them to bloody slaughter. The Mohammedans found that courage without experience and knowledge, and individual strength without organisation, were insufficient to cope with the relentless, well-equipped Japanese troops. Groups of them joined the 18th Group Army. They came with swords and arms taken from the Japanese. To respect their religion, they were organised into a special detachment. Instead of a political director as in other detachments, they elected an Ahung (mullah) to look after their daily life. Instead of a pork ration on feast days they got beef. While the soldiers listened to speeches or reports by their political directors, they held religious services. It was only after three months, that they themselves asked to have the same organisation as their comrades in other units, that they began to have a political director instead of the Ahung.

"In the spring of 1938, General Chu Teh and his wife attended a Sunday service in a Catholic church in S. E. Shansi. In the end he was invited to talk. He stressed freedom of religion, and appealed to all Catholics to participate in the fight against Japanese fascism. The 18th Group Army is proud of the assistance it received from some Catholic sisters in getting medicines from the occupied cities. It was only after the outbreak of the war in the Pacific, when Japan burnt and closed down the monasteries, foreign and Chinese, that this help stopped." \*

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In an interesting article, "The Mohammedan Brigade of Central Hopeh", Dr. B. K. Basu has given illuminating details. He writes:

"The head of the army health department of Central Hopeh, Dr. Koo, had just returned from H.Q. with a radio message in his hand. He jumped down from the foaming horse and waving the piece of paper in the air, exclaimed: 'Our Mohammedan Brigade has won a brilliant victory over the enemy the day before yesterday. In a bloody encounter with the Japanese it annihilated a battalion of the enemy forces, destroyed a couple of motor trucks and captured a number of light machine guns, rifles and ammunition, near Ah-ping hsien!' All the people of Central Hopeh and the Eighth Route Army regard this unique armed force of a minority race with warm affection. So when they heard this news, their eyes beamed with joy and pride.

"It was only at the beginning of 1938 that the core of this armed forces grew up in Central Hopeh. Now (1940) it claims more than 8,000 rifles. According to Central Government estimates, the whole of Hopeh, Chahar and Shansi provinces contain a Mohammedan population of only 400,000. In a limited part of this area the mobilisation of such a big number within a short period was a remarkable achievement. The early history of this armed force of the minority race is no less interesting. It originated in the fire of the peoples anti-Japanese struggle. When the Central Government troops retreated from North China in the face of the vigorous onslaught of the Japanese fascist war machine at the commencement of the present war, the Eighth Route Army filtered through the Japanese lines and took positions at its rear, organising the people of the so-called occupied areas and mobilising them into people's self-defence corps. In two of these battalions it was later found that there were more than one hundred Mohammedans. Finding this, the Army authorities, in order to give this race its due honour in fighting and to develop the national struggle for liberation on a much wider scale, took them out and formed one independent Mohammedan corps under its direct control. These hundred and odd men were given special training and thus became the nucleus of the future big brigade.

"In the early part of 1938, the Army base of Central Hopeh moved over to An-ping hsien and brought peace to the

population of that place, predominantly Mohammedan, by ridding them of bandits who were a constant plague. This made a great impression on the population, and when they came to know that there was a Mohammedan armed unit in this Army base, their co-religionists flocked in groups to join. Seeing this rapid increase in enlistment, the army authorities invited the Mohammedan priests (Ah-mungs or Mullahs) to work among these troops. They on their part unceasingly called upon their own people to assemble under the banner of their own detachment in order to defend the honour of motherland, race and religion, and free themselves from Japanese oppression. This augmented the fighting roll of this armed unit.

"In Ho-gian hsien, the Mohammedans independently organised one fighting unit. There was nobody to take the proper leadership, so they requested the local guerillas to help and lead them to fight the enemy.

"In July the same year, the Army authorities united these two units into one and formed a regiment. In this way there was a rapid improvement of their livelihood, political education and fighting strength. Since then they have fought not a few victorious battles over the enemy. The increase of prestige attracted further recruits, and soon it was felt necessary to expand it to the status of a brigade. Under the guidance of Eighth Route Army this Mohammedan Brigade is increasing day by day and developing better and better fighting qualities.

"During our stay in Central Hopeh, we had a chance to talk with the political commissar of the Army Zone: Chen, a long, lean, middle-aged man with both hands crippled due to injuries received in the old Red Army days. We had previously heard about a number of high Mohammedan officials both in military and governmental posts in other parts of China, but this is the first time that we learned about an army of Mohammedans fighting the enemy side by side with the Eighth Route Army. We were unfortunate in having missed this Brigade by two days, as when we arrived at the appointed place, the whole Brigade moved to a new position to engage the enemy. Anyway, we got a detailed account of it from Chen in the Headquarters.

"To begin with', he explained 'the Communist Party and the Eighth Route Army regard the Mohammedans as a national minority in China, a distinct race—one of the five main races of

China: Han, Manchu, Mohammedans, Mongolians and Tibetans. According to Japanese Army Department estimates there are some 8,645,000 Mohammedans in China, while another Japanese authority claims the number to be more than ten million. But the Central Government estimates it at 3,725,000, of which about one and a half million are in the four North Western provinces of Shensi, Kansu, Ninghsia and Chinghai, half a million in Yenan, and the rest scattered all over the various provinces of China.

“ ‘Since they settled down in China centuries ago and changed their nomadic habits to agriculture, they have been subjected to oppressive measures, economic, political and cultural, by the ruling race of China: although many of them became distinguished in high executive and military offices under various Dynasties by their own merit. Under the Ch’ing (the last) Dynasty, the oppression was more severe and took a more acute form as the Manchus used various devices to bring about quarrels and frequent conflicts between the Han people and the Mohammedans in order to perpetuate their ‘divide and rule’ policy. During this period there were no less than four big revolutionary upsurges of the Mohammedans.

“ ‘Since the Japanese invasion of our country the enemy is using the same principles to break our unity. Past history has taught the Mohammedans a bitter lesson and they began to disbelieve and hate the other races of China, especially the Hans. The enemy is using tactfully this psychology to divert and win over the minority nation of China from the path of liberation through anti-Japanese struggle. So we see today the establishment of the puppet states of ‘Manchukuo’, ‘Inner Mongolia’, the ‘Great Mohammedan State’, etc. The Japanese also sponsored various associations and unions of the minority races. The ulterior motive behind all these designs is to defeat and conquer the whole of China.

“ ‘They printed a lot of propaganda material and published pamphlets, newspapers and magazines in Arabic and other Mohammedan languages, and distributed them in the provinces of North China. They built and repaired many mosques, too, in order to hide their real purpose. After the retreat of the Kuomintang troops from Hopeh, Japanese propaganda materials were found in abundance in mosques and other public

Mohammedan places of Ping-hsien, Sin-lo, Ho-chuen, Chang-hsien, etc.

"In spite of this sweetened propaganda, the Japanese used all those brutal methods peculiar to them to oppress these people. Soon the Mohammedans realised that these very Japanese soldiers killed their brothers and fathers, looted their property, and raped their women. This was too much for the Mohammedans, who had led a rather peaceful life and prayed to God in their mosques. The chief characteristic of these people is that they are more sensitive to racial and religious questions than to their internal jealousies. They can unite solidly and fight boldly against any external foe endangering them. Angry curses began to go from mouth to mouth, from city to village, and all the Mohammedan population of Hopeh rose and united to resist the enemy, under the slogan : To love our religion, you must first love our country .

"At this time the Communists and the Eighth Route Army came over to Hopeh and liberated them from age long oppression, gave them real democracy, equal rights with other people in elections, in governments and other public activities, and helped to organise them into strong movements. In this way a part of the enemy's objective was frustrated. Then, in order to realise the final victory of China, the Mohammedan armed Brigade came into being.....'

\* \* \* \*

"The Political significance of this Brigade is a big one. First, a retaliatory blow has been given to the Japanese who attempted to breed bad blood between the different nationalities of China. Secondly, a demonstration has been given of the correct policy of the Communists towards national minorities: equal political rights, respect for their religion, culture and customs, helping them to become a strong anti-Japanese force to strengthen the Chinese nation, giving them democracy in all aspects, etc. Thirdly, the influence of the Eighth Route Army among the people has been magnified and the relation between the army and the people has become more close. The head of the political department of the 3rd Shock Detachment, Sun Zhyen, said: 'When the Mohammedan training corps was organised, the people in Ho-gian, Ching-hsien, etc., were very enthusiastic, and sent delegates, besides mobilising Mohammedans to join up.'

" Fostered by the Military authorities and the people because it represented a minority, it was not assigned very difficult jobs to perform. But facts showed that the men were very brave and tactful. Because of their special characteristics—strong character, readiness for sacrifice, valour, strong unity and cool-headedness, they are particularly adapted to offensive warfare. Here are a few of this Brigade's records. Fighting in Tzewen village of An-ping hsien ( Hopeh ), a hundred members of this Brigade defeated 400 bandits and captured their Chief. In the siege of enemy-occupied An-kou city, fifty Mohammedans joined the dare-to-die corps and were the first to scale the city wall. In an ambushade near Tu-lin, they blew up two Japanese lorries.

" The Mohammedans are used to very clean habits. They take a bath every day, do not eat pork, have fixed prayer times and other religious customs and observances. These are strictly followed in the Mohammedan Brigade as far as fighting conditions allow. They are given special treatment as regards food allowances. In the educational field, every one is given thorough political and military training. Illiteracy has been liquidated, the most backward can write at least 500 Chinese words, besides their own national language. Collective study, mutual help in studies, group meetings and discussions are very popular among the members of the Brigade. During recreation time they have club-room activities, self-criticism, reviews, etc., which have brought about a great progressive change in every individual. The former way of living has given place to united, tense and disciplined life. They sing their watchword :

" ' Dear Brother in Islam,  
Stand on the united front,  
No matter what the sacrifices—  
Struggle for national independence  
And national liberation."

## CHAPTER IX

### CULTURE FOR THE 'LAO PAI HSING'\*

What have the Communists contributed in the matter of education in the North-West? Have they a distinctive approach? It is bound to be so, because an educational system is merely the echo of the class alignments in society and the government. And the class alignment in the special Border Region is different from what it is in the rest of China.

Let us examine the problem more closely.

From the first, the Communists tackled the problem of education as essentially practical men. Grand paper schemes were discarded. Hsu Teh-li, "famous as the man who became a Communist when he was fifty," a veteran educationist from Changsha and one-time Commissar for Education under the Chinese Soviets, was entrusted with the work. His scheme has resulted in progress so rapid that no other area in China can compare with it. From an unknown backwater in 1936, today Yen-an has become the most potent educational centre of China as a whole. Training covers a wide field and new cultural influences find the most receptive soil.

But let 'Old Hsu' tell the tale.

"As nearly as we can estimate, virtually nobody but a few landlords, officials and merchants could read in the North-West before we arrived. The illiteracy seemed to be about 95 per cent. This is culturally one of the darkest places on earth. Do you know the people in North Shensi and Kansu believe that water is harmful to them? The average man here has a bath all over only twice in his life—once when he is born, the second time when he is married! They hate to wash their feet, hands, or faces, or cut their nails or their hair. There are more pigtailed in this part of China than anywhere else.

"But all this and many other prejudices are due to ignorance, and it's my job to change their mentality. Such a

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\* Lao Pai Hsing: The 'old hundred names' & the Chinese people. A common expression (especially used in the armies) to connote the common people "the masses."

population, compared with Kiangsi, is very backward indeed. There the illiteracy was about 90 per cent, but the cultural level was very much higher, we had better material conditions to work in, and many more trained teachers. In our model *hsien*, Hsing Kuo, we had over 300 primary schools and about 800 school teachers—which is as many as we have of both in all the Red districts here. When we finally withdrew from Hsing Kuo, illiteracy had been reduced to less than 20 per cent of the population !

“Here the work is very much slower. We have to start everything from the beginning. Our material resources are very limited. Even our printing machinery has been destroyed and now we have to print everything by mimeograph and stone-block lithograph. The blockade prevents us from importing enough paper, and although we have begun to make paper of our own, the quality is terrible. But never mind these difficulties. We have already been able to accomplish something. If we are given time we can do things here that will astonish the rest of China. We are training scores of teachers from the masses now, and the Party is training others, many of whom will become voluntary teachers for the mass educational schools. Our results show that the peasants here are eager to learn when given the chance. “And they are not stupid. They learn very quickly, and they change their habits when they are given good reasons for doing so. In the older, Soviet, districts here you won’t see any girl children with bound feet, and you will see many young women with bobbed hair. The men are gradually cutting off their pigtails now, and a lot of them are learning to read and write from the young Communists and the vanguards.” \*

That was the position when the Communists first reached the North-West.

How did the Reds go about their task ?

“Under the emergency Soviet educational system there were three sections: institutional, military, and social. The first was run more or less by the Soviets, the second by the Red Army, the third by Communist organisations. Emphasis in all of them was primarily political—even the littlest children learning their first characters in the shape of simple revolutionary slogans, and then working forward into stories of conflict between the Reds and the Kuomintang, landlords and peasants, capitalists and workers, and so on, with plenty of heroics about

the young communists and the Red Army, and promises of an earthly paradise of the Soviet future..... What was interesting was the collective use of whatever knowledge they had. These schools were really Communist, not only in ideology, but in the utilisation of every scrap of technical experience they could mobilise, to 'raise the cultural level'..... Entering one of these little 'social education centres' in the mountains, you might hear these people catechising themselves aloud: 'What is this?—'This is the Red Flag'. 'What is this?'—'This is a poor man. 'What is the Red Flag?'—'The Red Flag is the flag of the Red Army'. 'What is the Red Army?'—'The Red Army is the army of the poor men'..... When the farmers and farmers' sons and daughters finished the book they could not only read for the first time in their lives, but they knew who had taught them, and why. They had grasped the basic fighting ideas of Chinese Communism." \*

That was in the days when the Soviets ruled a portion of the North-West. Since the Sian incident days and the formation of the Border District on a United Front basis, all references to the Kuomintang have been altered. Education has been distinctly re-set on a new basis, the only possible basis: anti-Japanese resistance and the Three People's Principles. There is no more preaching of class-war against the landlords or mention of the Army as the Red Army. The institutional as well as social sections of education are managed by the elected democratic village and county committees working on the 'Three-thirds Scheme.'

Education in Yen-an and the Border Region has taken tremendous strides forward in the intervening period. From an area which was one of the poorest, most conservative and backward in the whole of China, today politically it is the best organised and the most awakened. In matters educational, considerable headway has been made. In the first four years, between 1937 and 1941, a tenfold increase was achieved in primary education alone.

"In 1939, there were 890 primary schools, in 1941 there were 1341, while the number of pupils increased from 22,089 to 43,625 during this period..... 78 per cent of the teachers are from the natives of the Border Region. There are seven middle schools, over 1,000 students, not including those in the vocatio-



nal schools, and those in various training classes. Speaking of social education, 'learn-to-read-and-write' classes are widely established; and night schools, half-day schools, institution for popular education, and circulating libraries, are making progress every day. As for the education of the anti-Japanese cadres, in the Border Region, many fine youths coming from various parts of the country, even from abroad, have been trained into able cadres, later scattering throughout the country to serve in the tasks of the anti-Japanese warfare." This is the summing up of the Wu Keh-Chien on the educational activities of the Border Government for the year 1941-42.

Stanton Lautenschlager records: "Winter schools have also been opened for adult peasants in five hundred places. These schools are carried on by local youth groups and village organisations with the help of the Government students, and those with a little education teach others with less. Primary education is difficult as the country is large and thinly populated. Villages are small and far apart. Families are poor and want their children to stay at home and work. Formerly families always wished to send at least one of their sons to school so that he could become an official and get rich, but now a Communist official gets only a simple living and five dollars a month, so that even that incentive is removed. However, in a few years, all children will be in school.....The Communists everywhere use the Roman script as a help to learning the Chinese 'characters' more quickly. In this way even those who are too old or who do not have the time to learn the characters will still be able to read. In Yen-an all shop signs and official notices are written in Roman script as well as in Chinese characters." \*

Anna Louise Strong met Professor Li Kung-po, one of the seven famous patriots who had been imprisoned in Soochow, who had been entrusted at the time with the work of organising a university for the Shansi-Hopei-Chahar Border Region. He told her about the spirit behind the scheme: "In the China of the past our education was not for the national revolution, not even for the national evolution. So, we must swiftly train new leaders both for political work in the army and to replace lower government officials, many of whom are either fools or corrupt.....We must awaken the people, organise, train, and arm them, reorganise the army, get new blood into government.

Only thus shall we get the final victory in our national revolutionary fight. We need leaders for this....." \*

"The teachers.....are young men and girls who see their work among the children as a part of the national struggle, not simply as a means of filling their rice-bowls. The old parrot-like, sing-song repetition of the classics which once filled the air around the typical dark, hovel-like village school-room has now disappeared. So has the decayed scholar who ruled his pupils with a rod of iron.....Education is now free, and the poorest can go to school.....The curriculum is simple—consisting of reading, writing, arithmetic, 'talk on the national crisis' and 'general knowledge in national defence'.....Elementary readers consisted not of 'I am a little boy, you are a little girl' phrases, but of short stories entitled: 'Why Japan fights China', 'Good men go to the Front', 'Comfort our wounded warriors'. In arithmetic the children do not count in abstract figures, but thus: 'Four Manchurian provinces plus five North China provinces make nine of our provinces invaded by the enemy'. Most of the studies take place in the open air and are combined with games. When the pupils are taught the subject of self-defence, they take little swords and do sentry duty around the village. Soldiers are often quartered in the schools. The children make friends with them..... and learn in practice how to achieve 'co-operation between the army and the people'. Patriotism is not taught by abstract lectures. The children are told stories of heroes of the anti-Japanese war, and in particular of their own Border Area. The essays they are asked to write must deal with concrete problems: 'How our fighters took Pingshan', 'Why we must produce a bigger crop'. During the sowing and harvesting campaigns, the little children work in the fields with their teacher at their head..... Not only do adults teach children, but children teach adults. Primary school pupils conduct reading classes for illiterate peasants. At noon, one can see scores of boys and girls pouring out into the fields where the men are resting from their morning's work. .... They give short talks..... lead the peasants in mass singing and teach them a few characters every day..... This is the 'Little Teacher system'..... It is recognised that the duty of everyone who has improved his knowledge is to hand it on to others." \*

On his last visit in 1940, Edgar Snow found: "Despite its wretched material conditions and almost daily visits from

enemy bombers, it (Yenan) offered a wide variety of training and new cultural influences..... mass education was ahead of any district in free China. There were over 700 Chinese character-study groups and 208 night schools for adults. Formerly Shensi's only schools of higher education were in Sian. Now Yenan had four middle schools and three colleges, besides an art academy, the largest in China, a technical training academy, and an Industrial Cooperative Vocational Training school for boys. The latter recruited its students from 'little devils', mostly orphans, rewarded for their loyalty and intelligence in patriotic service....." \*

\* \* \* \*

The 'University of Resistance—K'ang Ta—is the famous anti-Japanese military and political university of the Border Region, the successor to the old Red Academy of the Eighth Route Army with a new name and changed political approach.

The K'ang Ta consists of a Central College with six different 'branches', the Yenan K'ang Ta being Branch No. 3. Except for the Yenan branch, the colleges are situated in occupied territory behind the Japanese lines. Two thousand students in Yenan, and eight thousand in the other colleges, with another ten thousand already passed out graduates who are at work in one sector or another, represent the contribution of the K'ang Ta to the anti-Japanese struggle.

"Until 1939, the entire College was concentrated in North Shensi, but so many students were detained or imprisoned while en route through the Kuomintang districts that it was decided to move the larger part of the college behind the Japanese lines. Thus friction could be avoided with anti-Red groups, the Japanese evidently being considered a minor worry." \*\*

In Yenan, the K'ang Ta Branch has converted an old Confucian temple into some of its class-rooms, while the office, the dormitories and the rest of the class-rooms are located in caves in the loess hills nearby. The majority of students are between sixteen and thirty years. The curriculum is more practical than theoretical, with the students working in factories and work-sheds round about the colleges earning a part of their university fees. The text-books have been consciously prepared with a view to equip the student for facing the present revolu-

tionary situation in China. It is a university where revolutionaries are being moulded out of the tremendously rich and pliable material that the war has brought to the surface. Life is simple, almost ascetic, and highly disciplined. "Political training, while Marxist, is chiefly devoted to explaining the united front and the San Min Chu I in relation to Communist programme and policy." \*

\* \* \* \*

When the communists migrated from Kiangsi, along with the army marched out a whole medical college, with all portable medical apparatus on the backs of students and professors. When Yen-an was occupied by the Reds, this medical college settled down in the loess caves, in the midst of the poverty-stricken and backward villages of the North-West. Since it has had to change its location five times, it can easily be called a 'portable college',—a record even for China, where the advancing Japanese have necessitated the shifting of many schools and colleges inland.

Accommodation at the Yen-an medical college is for 300 students at a time. Two-thirds of these are women. The staff works out at about 200. Just as students come from practically all the provinces of China, so also does the staff. The total number of graduates has crossed the thousand mark. Apparatus and charts are locally prepared by the students with the aid of the staff. The best charts have been the handiwork of a disabled soldier, who has cultivated a special talent for the job.

The spirit of the College is permeated at every step with ideals of equality, democracy and service. The patients get the best, the teaching staff the remnants left over after everybody, including the students, have had their share. Improvisation of the requisite teaching material, a keen utilisation of experience so far gained, and an unorthodox attitude to medical science and its development, are the most outstanding qualities that mark the college.

Here are trained the doctors and the masses for the army as well as for the village dispensaries, roving and static, which cater to the population of the occupied areas. Each graduate is equipped not only medically, but politically too, his first qualification being his zeal for anti-fascist resistance.

"It is located in Liu Shu Dian, 20 li to the east gate of Yen-an. Formerly it was the Hygienic College established in

1931 at Kiangsi. By 1940 it was reorganised as the Yen-an Medical University of China. It is divided into two colleges: the college of medicine and the college of medicine-manufacturing. Under the college of medicine there are the departments of anatomy, of physiology, of medical theory, of disease, and bacteriological department. Under the college of medicine-manufacturing, there are two classes: medical manufacturing and medicine-preparing. Besides, there is a nurse-training class. The curriculum covers a period of 2 to 5 years.

"By way of equipment, there are 14 laboratories, and the International Peace Hospital serves as the experimental hospital for it. 'Chemical-manufacturer' is the experimental factory of the college of medicine-manufacturing.

"A Yen-an Student Sanatorium was started on December 31, 1940, in the north suburb of Yen-an. It is housed in 60 caves with 200 beds. During 1941, it treated nearly a thousand patients, nearly 500 being indoors.

"The Central Committee of the Communist Party has contributed two-thirds of the expenditure, nearly 60,000 dollars. The lack of money, drugs and surgical equipment are the chief difficulties." \*

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A College of Natural Science was started in July 1940. It is divided into two parts: the Preparatory Class and the College. The Preparatory Class includes Algebra, Analytic Geometry, Physics, Chemistry and English. It is a course of two years. In the College there are four departments: Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mineralogy-Metallurgy. Every department has its own courses for specialisation.

The President is Comrade Shu Teh-li; the Vice-President, Professor Cheng Kangpei, a Germany-returned student, an expert chemist, who has worked in Hunan for many years. Other professors are mostly students who qualified abroad and professors of other Universities, such as Professor King Chu-kuang, formerly of the Lingnan University.

The College has three factories: (1) a mechanical factory manufacturing various utensils, spinning wheels, wagons, farming tools, etc.; (2) a glass factory, making glass for common use and test tubes, etc.; (3) an alcohol factory using as raw material the local glutinous rice. These factories are under the direction of their respective departments, are used as training

ground for the students. Added to this, there is a farm under the department of Biology.

The College is located outside the south gate of Yen-an. There are 180 students in the Preparatory Class, and 40 in the College. Admission qualification for the Preparatory Class is the junior middle school graduation, that for the college is senior middle school certificate.

In the Biology Laboratory they boast of one microscope. Equipment, as a rule, is non-existent, and mostly improvised.

In Yen-an expert scientists are well-treated. Their food is much better and their allowance amount to 300 dollars, while the Communist workers receive only four and a half dollars, including the director. When elections take place, they are eligible for the presidium, their dependents also enjoy special treatment.

Lacking text-books, lacking all facilities of a normal science college, one can admire the bravery and boldness of these men in search of progress and science, who struggle against impossible odds to keep abreast of the times.

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Lu Hsun is the Gorky of China. He has written short stories, and he has written inspiring verse. The manner in which he turned to writing as a profession depicts the man.

His original ambition in life was to become a medical man, to be able to cure the diseases of his countrymen, and to save them from the fraud of quacks who flourished enormously in the land. He had gone to Japan as a student of medicine, where his professor showed him some lantern slides of landscapes. One of them was of some Chinese spies acting on behalf of the Tsarist Russians during the Russo-Japanese War. They had been arrested and beheaded by the Japanese in the street before a cheering crowd. Lu Hsun was mortally hurt at the plight of his countrymen, "acting as the henchmen of one power and becoming victims at the hands of another". He decided to give up medicine as a profession. "I realise there is more disease to be cured in the souls of my countrymen than in their bodies," he said, and took to the writing profession. His first book of short stories was entitled 'The Graveyard'. His first story, 'Ah Q', was a bold and merciless exposure of the Chinaman with all his absurdities and angularities devastatingly laid bare. 'The Diary of a Mad Man' was in the same

style. He also wrote poetry, and placed before the Chinese world the struggles of the peasantry.

Lu Hsun is now dead.

So the Lu Hsun Academy of Arts at Lu I in Yenan is dedicated to the memory of this revolutionary Lu Hsun, as an inspiration to the masses of China. At the Academy there are 500 students, writers, artists, dramatists, composers, and other talents, who live in a long line of caves, and whose Art Gallery is situated in an abandoned Roman Catholic Church in a valley nearby. A whole hill is reserved for work-studios, where the students toil over new creations. The curriculum is very varied and covers sculpture, drawing, painting, as well as drama, music and literature. It is at Lu I that the new music of China is being brought to birth, where orchestras work out new revolutionary songs which thrill the Chinese soldier on the field of battle and the peasant in the rear of the enemy lines.

Edgar Snow has described an evening spent in the midst of these artists: "And then the symphony began. Yes, *symphony*, for here I first heard the work of Hsi Hsu-hai, the youth whose melodies and operas are now sung from the Yellow River to the Yellow Sea. Composer Hsi himself was there, leading his queer orchestra, with its mass of Chinese tom-toms and Yang-chins and flutes, its foreign strings, cellos and violins, and those odd inventions of his own, cut from standard oil tins, strung with local gut. Leading it was Hsi himself, a madman or a genius, I know not which. They say his European tutors were quite convinced it was the former.

"But what I heard was good. It lived, it spoke, it held its audience entranced. Was he a thief? There was a bar from Beethoven, but not quite; a phrase of almost-Bach, some notes from the Red Chamber Dream, now a mountaineer's yodel, a boatman's toilsome chant, the roar of a river, a rattle of musketry. Hsi called the composition 'Yellow River', and it was epic in form, its vocal parts sung by a mixed chorus of sixty voices, telling of a nation's triumphs and defeats, and of a people's death and its regeneration. The singing was good, with no trace of the horrible operatic falsetto. Here were rich natural voices, full and strong, in pleasing mandarin. Yet, despite its strong borrowing from abroad, it remained China—but China of Tomorrow, with a door half-open to the West..... With this Academy, Yenan was now as much a Mecca for

radicals in art as in politics, for here mass art was no crime against the state, and they could 'raise the cultural level of the masses' to their hearts' content.....I was the guest of some of these 'cultural bandits', as they are known to China's cultural conservatives....." \*

When Shanghai fell to the Japanese, the cultural life of that Paris of China split up, and detachments left for the interior. It is these that later became the backbone of the cultural renaissance of China as a whole. But the best and the choicest have by now gathered round the Lu Hsun Academy at Yen-an.



## CHAPTER X

### WE SING, WE ACT, AND WE RESIST

The call of Yen-an has not been restricted to the awakened peasant, to the politically alive worker, or to the horror-struck student. The call has been heard by the artists and the writers and the musicians, and they have now come together at Lu-Hsun as they used to in past ages at the courts of the Sung and the Ming and the Ch'ing Emperors. Yen-an is now the most important cultural base of new and revolutionary China; Yen-an, which only a few years ago was a dead district town of the petrified North-West.

Listen to Lu Chi, who can rank with the writer of the Marseillaise, as he sings his revolutionary songs in Yen-an :

*Wo-men shih pei ya p'o ti min chu,*

*Wo-men shu yao chan cheng.....*

We are the people in oppression,

We have to fight !

Fight to break our chains, fight to win peace.....

Brothers ! Arm yourselves ! Arise !

On to Shantung, on to Hopei,

To the Front !

Drive the fierce Japanese invaders

Beyond our borders,

With our own blood struggle for peace !

Or let us meet Liu Liang-mo, anywhere behind the Japanese lines. "Young, slim, and finely-drawn, he seemed to be listening to and prompting each singer separately, while at the same time he himself never stopped singing. He seemed two men—one singing, like his audience with relieved passion at being able at last to utter the 'one last cry' of every Chinese; the other disciplined and methodical, teaching and listening. This man was no mere organiser of glee-clubs, rejoicing in a successful sing-song. He was a portent. He was developing not a bright idea of his own, but a new way of expression for the latent source of power and dawning consciousness of his

people. Liu Liang-mo himself has set whole cities and provinces singing. But song promotes itself, and there are more urgent things to be done... he has led groups of worker-students to the fronts of greatest suffering." \*

And what is this song he sings, a flaming torch which lights 'resistance' in the hearts of millions of Chinese? It is the song of songs of modern China: the March of the Manchurian Volunteers.

It was written by Nieh Erh, "who is now dead, but continues to sing in a million voices."

The history of Nieh Erh is significant.

"Nieh Erh, composer of the 'March', was a natural genius; and his appearance in the Chinese musical world was a portent, a flash illuminating the tremendous talent lying hidden in China's masses of lowly and oppressed..... Nieh Erh early took up the Chinese worker's heritage of hunger and back-breaking toil. First he was a coolie, then a soldier. In 1933, he made his way to Shanghai. Somehow he acquired a mouth-organ, and through much labour and great love made himself a complete master of this modest instrument. His playing won the appreciation and encouragement of a Shanghai moving-picture director, who provided him with an opportunity to study the piano and the violin. With his almost savage application to work, Nieh Erh became a competent performer within a few months. Then he took up composition. In 1934, he wrote 'The Great Road', a pioneer effort in cinematographic realism in China, a portrayal of the solidarity, power and fighting spirit of the people whom Nieh Erh knew and from whom he had sprung. 'On the great Road we shed our sweat and blood together', sing his toilers along the highway:—

Together, together we strain at our loads,

Together we fear neither iron nor pain.

All forward together! Our battle is one!

The great road to freedom together we'll tread!

"Nieh Erh's talent made him a singer. His utter artistic integrity, his organic loyalty to the masses which had given him birth, made him a singer of the people. It was logical that he should write the people's hymn of resistance. But Nieh Erh was never to see the Chinese people answer his call. He was

never to hear his songs on the lips of millions of fighters for China's liberation, fighters at last 'Together', but without Nieh Erh. In 1934, the pressure of censorship made impossible the further progress of the realistic cinema. Nieh Erh left for Japan.....he planned to go to the Soviet Union to study the new music of that country.....Then he went swimming at the seaside resort of Kugamena and was drowned. The circumstances were mysterious and the state of the body suggested that he might first have been stunned and then thrown into the stream. He was only twenty-four when he perished." \*

It was Tien Han, "most vital and talented of China's new dramatists", who wrote the words for the 'March of the Manchurian Volunteers'. The Nanking Government had jailed Tien Han for two years for his early championship of the cause of resistance. He was one of those released in the amnesty of 1937. The March was banned by the Central Government till after the beginning of the War with Japan. "Inspired by the heroic struggles of the people of Manchuria to free themselves from the Japanese yoke, this stirring chant has captured the heart and imagination of the whole country. From the front lines to the great cities, and from the cities to the remotest villages, every Chinese knows it and every Chinese sings it. The history of the March of the Volunteers is the history of the rising tide of resistance to Japanese aggression. Both its music and its words sprang from the depths of the Chinese people, from the dark Chinese reality of the period of capitulation." \*\*

And the March triumphantly sings :

Arise, all who will not be slaves,  
Our flesh and blood shall be the new Great Wall.....  
Crisis has come to the people of China,  
And now each of us is driven to give one last cry —  
Arise! Arise! Arise!.....  
Millions are as one,  
Braving enemy cannon!  
Onward!  
Braving enemy cannon,  
Onward, Onward, Onward! On!

The 'Taihang Shan Guerilla Song' is also in great vogue everywhere:

**The horizon is red—the golden glory,  
The call of Freedom has come to us with a song;  
Look ! thousands of mountains and tens of thousands  
of rivers.**

**How they have hardened like iron and copper !**

**The anti-Japanese fire is alight everywhere in the Taihang Shan;**

**The flames have a thousand eyes and tongues tens of thousands feet long.**

**Listen ! the mother is calling upon her son to fight  
the devils.**

## The wife is sending her husband to the firing line.

**We are on the Taihang Shan,**

**We are on the Taihang Shan.**

**Our mountains are high, and the forests are dense.**

**Our soldiers are veterans and our horses are sturdy  
and strong;**

Wherever the enemy dares to attack, we shall  
decimate him on his own chosen spot.

Another song which is constantly sung is about the links of the people with the army :

**Hai-ho-hai, hai-ho-hai,**

**We, the army and the people are one.**

**We, the army and the people act together.**

**You are fighting at the front—I am helping you at the rear,  
Digging trenches, sending ammunition : oh yes, we have  
plenty of blood and sweat to shed.**

**All have but one united heart and are at work together in the same rhythm.**

**Hai-ho-hai, hai-ho-hai, we shall know no peace, until the Japanese devils be driven from our sacred soil.**

**A song which calls for more production is interesting :**

**Plough the virgin soil, plough it quick,**

Soldiers at the front need food.

We weave cloth, we weave cloth, because the front-  
line warriors need uniforms to wear;  
The big sister-in-law and the grandfather, the wife  
and the baby need not be anxious for the warrior at  
the front;

We must plough and weave, yes, very very fast,  
So that the soldiers have enough to eat and to wear;  
Oh do not worry, after the devil is killed they will  
all come back home triumphant."

Writing poems is a national art. Chu Teh, the Commander-in-Chief of the Eighteenth Group Army, in the winter of 1939 wrote a few lines which are on many lips:

Going by the side of the Taihang Shan mountain  
range,

Riding on a horse, in October, when snow is falling  
thick and fast,

Everyone is feeling cold, our uniforms are thin and  
do not give us warmth;

The way is simple—we must go out everynight and  
kill more devils,

That is the way to warm ourselves."

Chinese words have been put to the tune of the 'Internationale' and in Shenpei there is hardly a single person who does not proclaim the international brotherhood of all toilers through it. In Romanised Chinese it reads:

Chilai gixan gia fodi nuli  
Chilai chuan shedgied zuirhen  
Man changdi rhzye igin futang  
Zo i zui xodi dozheng  
Zin shegic daa di loxua lui shue  
Nulimn chilai chilai  
Mo iao shua women iuan Buzh  
Women iao Zo Tian Xiad Zhurhm  
Zinsh Zhui Xodi Dozheng  
Tuangie chilai dao ming tian  
Internationale iding iao shxian

The Lu Hsun Academy teaches both cultural and propaganda types of music, and emphasises the use of Chinese musical instruments, and Chinese musical traditions. A significant development is the revival of folk-tunes and folk-songs, and mass singing. New wine is constantly being poured into the old bottles. The battles and the struggles of the peoples against the invaders have been immortalised in popular songs, and not only has the army become a 'singing army', but the people too have taken to the art of singing together the anti-fascist and freedom songs. The nation is becoming group-song-conscious as never before. *Wan ren ho chang*—'let all the people sing together'—is the slogan. And it works, works miracles wherever it has been applied.

\* \* \* \*

Painters have likewise gathered at Lu I. Their work depicts more and more the impact of the war on the common people, the toilers of the land. The cartoon technique, which has reached very high standards, with the pen and brush of Yeh Chien-yu, has become very popular. The art of woodcut has aroused new interest, and Lu Hsun Academy has practised it the most successfully. Here at Lu Hsun there is no ivory tower for the artist to seclude himself in. The age-old styles, as also the age-old subjects, have been scrapped. Just like the 'proletarian writers,' the 'proletarian artists' have also turned for inspiration to the toiler and the underdog in China. Sculptures of soldiers, fighters for freedom, depicting strength, determination and idealism, of the 'little devils', busts of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, of the Chinese leaders, Mao and Chu—all these were witnessed at one time and another by different foreign observers in the work-studios of Lu Hsun.

\* \* \*

Anna Louise Strong has described the latest trends in the literary renaissance :

" Editors whom I met in Hankow told me that the new trend in Chinese literature dates back to the Sian Incident, and the rise of the national united front that followed. Authors turned to biographies of Manchurian guerilla fighters and to the fighting farmers of North China. When the present war began and fighting spread on a large scale through the country more and more leading writers put their pens at the service of the war. Literature became simple and full of incident, design-

ed to arouse the people. It dealt not so much with Japan's internationally imperialist policies, but portrayed the invaders very concretely as robbers and murderers, burning houses, raping women. Its theme became 'Defend your homes', rather than 'Resist imperialism'. It is full of heroic deeds of Chinese soldiers and of the sufferings of Chinese people.....

"In poetry a new form, called 'Poems to be declaimed', differs from both the classic and the romantic traditions. Mo Mo-tien, formerly well-known for romantic verse, has turned to this declamatory type of poetry, and a less-known younger poet, Kao-lan, published a whole book called 'Poems to be Declaimed', all written to stir the people. Poets themselves began to go out to villages, declaiming their poetry to rural audiences, sometimes to musical accompaniment.....

"Many writers have gone to the front for active service in arousing the people; among these the most important are Ting Ling, the leading left-wing woman writer; Hsu Chen, the well-known novelist; and Chou Li-po, the essayist. Most of them are too active to spend much thought on the theory of writing. When I asked Ting Ling to tell me the latest tendencies in Chinese literature, she answered, 'I don't know a single thing about literary tendencies; I've been six months at the front. But I have a clear opinion about the duty of the writer. He has only one task today: to help save the country. We must not lose ourselves in theories of literature; we must simply write to arouse the masses.' " \*

Modern Chinese literature has undergone three distinct phases of development. The first phase is the 'Literary Revolution' from 1915 to 1925. A battle-royal raged between the exponents of the classical style, and the writers led by Dr. Hu Shih, the guiding spirit of the "vernacular" movement. The traditional taboo on amorous expressions and amorous incidents was the chief target that was attacked. The triumph was more linguistic than literary. The artists of the 'emancipated brush', along with Kang Pai-ch'ing with his collection of love lyrics, 'The Pasture Ahead', and Miss Juan Chun with her short stories about the adventures of an eloping girl, wrote profusely about girl beggars, child-labour, and the miseries of rickshaw-coolies. The Crescent Moon Society translated Goethe's "Sorrrows of the Young Werther," Omar Khayyam's 'Rubaiyat' and similar highly emotional prose and poetry.

The Shanghai Massacre of May 1935 began the second phase, when the triumphant 'vernacular' movement itself split into two. With the split in the Kuomintang, 'proletarian' writers and 'ivory towerists' became the literary replicas of the Communists and of the Nankingites. A League of Left-Wing Writers came into existence in 1930, and Cheng Feng-wu wrote on its behalf: "A writer's love should be just as strong as his hatred, for literature is the conscience of the age. Writers themselves are the warriors of this conscience. We deem it our duty to attack all systems of injustice and the evils of convention."

Art was no more to be for art's sake, but to be the handmaid of life itself. Mao Tun wrote his novel 'Midnight' exposing the exploitation in the cities and the sad plight of the peasant. Ting Ling depicted factory life in all its horrors. Hsiao Chun, who was himself with the Manchurian guerillas, wrote 'Village in August', a tale of the guerilla fighters.

The third phase in the literary movement began with the invasion of China by the Japanese. The need for unity overshadowed all differences and ideological quarrels. 'United National Defence' became the dominant note also in progressive literary circles. The National League of Writers was formed in Hankow in 1938. Branches rapidly spread all over the country. Writers driven inland from their East-coast havens, formed into small batches—"Comfort Corps"—and roamed the hills and the dales, in company now with the once-despised peasants, now with the guerillas or the front army soldiers, living the simple life, forgetting their pedantry and the artificial existence of China's sea-coast 'modern' towns. The literate had now come to the heart of China, the real China, and now saw and experienced the life of the masses, themselves denuded of all their possessions—practically proletarianised. The grim reality of the social revolution that has resulted from the war has gripped them too. The Communists had roamed half a continent in search of a haven of rest. They had gone to the masses and initiated the literature of the masses, the proletarian literature of China. No wonder that the new progressive literature of the China of today is a strong, buoyant, ruthless literature, with its feet firmly planted in the native soil, a literature of the people, a literature dealing with material which



is procured first-hand and, at a time when the whole nation is experiencing its biggest upheaval.

The first Communist daily newspaper was inaugurated in Hankow on January 9, 1938. It was named the *New China Daily News*. "Representatives of all sections of Chinese society welcomed the appearance of the daily. 'We hope it will criticise the Government's failings and help it with practical suggestions for the carrying out of resistance', said the sixty-year old jurist Shen Chu-ju, oldest of the 'Seven Leaders' of the National Salvation Movement, who had been arrested in the previous year, now a member of the National Defence Council. 'We will look to your paper to interpret the social meaning of the war and expose every tendency towards capitulation', said Dr. Teng Chiu ming, a professor of Kwangsi University. Chang Hai-meng, an official of the Legislative Yuan, declared: 'I am an old member of the Kuomintang, and I say frankly that we have not carried out the will of Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Today we need the aid of the Communist Party to recapture the national revolutionary spirit of 1925. The Communists know how to organise the people. If we could not beat the Northern militarists without the organisation of the masses, how much more do we need their aid to defeat the Japanese invaders.'

"Wang Ming (Chen Shao-yu), a member of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party, and once China's delegate to the Comintern, spoke frankly on the nature and aims of the new organs. 'Our editor, Comrade Pan Tse-min, is a Communist, and we will expect him to follow the line of the Party in all respects. But this need not worry anyone. The line of the Party today is the line of the Chinese people. Its problems are theirs. The newspaper will discuss all the difficult questions connected with organisation of resistance. It will frankly point out weaknesses and tendencies dangerous to China. The National United Front of the Chinese people already exists. It would be false to deny that some friction between the various groups forming it also continues to exist. By frank discussion, our newspaper will help to remove misunderstandings and to strengthen the unity of all parties in the fight for a new, regenerated China.'

"The establishment of the *New China Daily News* was an event of great importance. Many times, during the following

months, points of dispute between the Kuomintang and the Communists were the object of polemics between their organs. Free discussion took the place of armed struggle and police terror.....Every book-store in Hankow displayed hundreds of titles dealing with the history and achievements of the (Eighth Route) Army, the Communist Party and the Special District. Some of these books and pamphlets were good descriptions and analyses of their subject. Others were ignorantly written by hack-writers. But anything in print about the Eighth Route Army would sell, the book-stores shouted for more and poor writers in need of pocket-money sat up nights compiling new accounts. There was nothing extraordinary or alarming about this demand for information.....For ten years nothing had been openly printed dealing with an extremely significant and dramatic phase of modern Chinese history and an extremely important tendency in modern Chinese political thought. Now the high walls around what had once been forbidden subjects were broken..... This, and other features of the democratic awakening, caused some Kuomintang groups to think back fondly to the days of police suppression of 'Dangerous thoughts'. Enemies of the United Front, from the notorious Wang Ching-wei to the Trotskyists..... launched a new attack on the Communist Party. On January 17, a band of strong-arm men wrecked the offices of the *New China Daily News*. Newsboys who sold the paper returned, bruised and bloody, telling how they had been set upon and beaten and their papers taken away. On the following day, attacks on the Communists, their publications, and the Eighth Route Army, appeared once more in the Kuomintang Press. One editorial pointed to the German Nazis as China's best friends, and to the Third Reich as a model for her political development. Another demanded the re-introduction of one-party dictatorship and 'control of thought'. ..... In the meantime, Chiang Kai-shek himself had expressed his dissatisfaction with their activities....." \*

The freedom of the Press is now again threatened, and is once again asserting itself.

Wall newspapers are found all over Shenpei in every establishment. From Yenan are now printed a daily and a weekly—the *Emancipation Daily* controlled by the North-Western Bureau of the Communist Party, with a circulation of

some 40,000 copies, and the *People's Weekly*—controlled by the Shenpei Government.

From Chungking is printed the *New China Daily*—now with a circulation of over 80,000 copies. The Editor at Yen-an is Comrade Po Ku, and at Chungking, Wu Keh-chen. The New China News Agency—the Hun Hua—supplies news of the occupied areas and Shenpei to all China.

At Yen-an and at Chungking, Communist Publishing Houses have been established. Standard works of foreign authors have been translated and printed. Speeches and writings of Mao Tse-tung, Chu Teh, Lo Fu and the other leaders have gone through several editions. The history of the Chinese Revolution, and Marxist theoretical works applied to Chinese conditions are two subjects which attract writers as well as readers. Books on military and political sciences are favourites. Books on natural science, art, literature, the novel, essays, reportage, poetry—all are represented. Edgar Snow records a significant omission: "To my regret, however, I discovered that the collective history of the Long March which was being compiled when I left Pao An in 1936, had been abandoned. It was considered 'inconsistent with the United Front'." \*

Here is an example of the spirit which governs Yen-an and the Communists even in things literary.

\* \* \* \* \*

One of the greatest achievements in the field of literature is the new drama. It has come to the rescue of propaganda for the war of resistance as no other art, not even poster-painting, has. It has not remained an adjunct of the petty-bourgeois intellectual, a product of drawing-rooms attached to Universities. The drama has sallied forth to the masses, has been shaped by them into a people's theatre. News-plays can be seen any day on any village square, with the simplest setting for a background. Itinerant actors and actresses make continuous tours, strengthening the morale of the people, educating them politically, giving new values and patriotic arguments to the peasant to rise and join the partisan bands in the hills or support the people's army.

"Chinese drama has gone to war. Not only has the war stirred Chinese writers to new, heroic subjects. War has smashed former centres of dramatic and literary culture—

Shanghai, Peiping—and forcibly scattered writers and dramatists across China. Authors and actors move across the country. They seek refuge in interior provinces; they seek subjects at battle-fronts. Art is forced back to the people. A new culture of the inner provinces begins.

“For the past two decades Chinese culture faced outward towards Europe. The Renaissance Movement of 1919 turned the attention Chinese youth to European and American writers, and broke the dominant influence of old Chinese classics. Chinese boys and girls came to the coast for education, wealthier students crossed the seas to America and Europe. They became merchants, bankers, compradors, interpreters—channels through which foreign goods and foreign ideas entered China. Writers and dramatists copied foreign writers.

“The shattering by war of centres and channels of culture which for two decades dominated China has forced the Chinese to seek new ones...

“In drama the prevailing form has become the one-act play of great simplicity, suitable for performance on temple platforms or even in village streets, and therefore with a minimum of scene changes. Tien Han, leading left-wing dramatist, wrote two short plays which are very popular with the dramatic groups: ‘Defence of Lukon-chiao’ and ‘Final Victory.’ Some of the dramas are so extremely simple that teachers from nearby villages are able to take them back to their pupils and perform them, with considerable improvisation, in village schools. One such playlet portrayed ‘Old Man China’ surrounded by a host of blue-clad daughters. An evil neighbour entered with many flourishing gestures of attack, seized one of the daughters and dragged her from the stage, revealing the inscription ‘Manchuria’ on her back. There followed the seizure of other daughters—Jehol, Chahar. Before all the daughters were seized, the son of the family, labelled ‘Chinese Army’, came to defend his sisters. He overpowered the evil neighbour, and thereupon the previously captured daughters smiled through the door at the rear of the stage in token that they would soon return. A playlet as simple as this is soon copied even by children in their games. Many different versions are already current.....’ We have played in the past few months to eighty thousand people—most of them peasants, many of them soldiers. From the standpoint of art our playing

is backward, but the peasants like to see us because we dramatise their own life. We live like common soldiers, our food is not plentiful, and our transport is chiefly our own feet. We put on dramas, make public speeches, draw cartoons on the village walls, and teach the peasants to sing. We must teach at least two songs to every village. Our life, you see, is rather hard, but our audiences have smiling faces when we come, even in the midst of all this danger and death. So we are happy too.' Thus did Ting Ling voice the literary tendencies of China's writers and actors who are working to arouse their fellow-countrymen to win the war....." \*

"Collective work by writers has become widespread in China. Playwrights were the first to work in this manner. Later collectively written novels and short-stories began to appear...Many volumes of plays about the struggle of the Chinese people were published in China in the past year. One of the best is 'A Volume of Plays for the Crossroads'. It contains ten short plays calling upon the Chinese people to unite in the fight against the Japanese plunderers. One of the plays, 'The People's Wrath' by Su Fan, tells how a young man, learning that his sweetheart's father has proved a traitor, kills him without faltering. Of the other plays in the volume, notable are Yu Kin's 'Banish the Whip,' and Ma Hsiang's 'Eight Hundred Brave Men', a dramatic tale about the heroic defenders of Shanghai." \*\*

I. Epstein has recorded a graphic event :

"On September 18 ( 1938 ) I heard for the first time over the great 75-KW metropolitan radio station, Nieh Erh's 'March of the Volunteers', a song long prohibited in Nanking, and which I had last heard in the Japanese-dominated North. All China was beginning to sing it now.

"A day or two later, in the auditorium of Nanking middle school I attended a dramatic performance by the Peiping and Tientsin Students' Union. The Union's dramatic groups planned to go out into the country, and the stage-sets were accordingly simple, using only the resources which could be found in any village. The one-act plays were powerful and moving. One, 'A Night in Peiping,' showed a group of students heroically carrying on an underground printing plant in the occupied capital of China's culture. Another, 'Defence of

Marco Polo Bridge,' vividly reproduced the outbreak of the war. The student actors knew their material..... While one boy was demonstrating how national propaganda could be presented through the medium of the old 'Big Drum' minstrelsy, the recitative ballad style used by Chinese storytellers and dear and familiar to the peasantry, Japanese planes attacked the city. The scream of power-driven planes, the thud of bombs and the crack of anti-aircraft guns brought the audience to its feet, prepared for panic. But the performance did not stop.' The student singer went on. 'At Marco Polo Bridge', he sang, 'we heard the big guns of the enemy.' A bomb 200 yards away shook the building. 'But we were not afraid, and returned every blow of the Japanese dwarfs with a blow of our own. 'Another bomb came down. We can hear the bombs of the enemy now', chanted the student. 'But we shall not stop fighting till we have driven him back into the sea'...Everyone kept his seat...This was how the new dramatic art of China grew, and how it gave courage and inspiration while it experimented, in the fire of battle, with new methods which would bring it closer to the people....." \*

Thus has the drama and the song been linked to the life of the nation, the war of resistance, the fight for existence.

## CHAPTER XI

### IS IT 'HSING-LA' OR 'WEIHSIEN'?

Whither China? Where do the Communists in the Border Region seek to lead the Chinese nation? Is there a Civil War awaiting the Chinese nation round the corner? What are the probabilities, if a civil war does break out?

Comrade Wu Liang-p'ing has given a detailed answer. The intentions of the Communists are no hidden secrets.

"The main task of the Chinese Communist Party in realising the transformation to socialism in China is to get the hegemony of the new Democratic Republic to be formed during the new phase of the bourgeois democratic nationalist revolution. Whether this transformation will be peaceful or not, we cannot say. If we have the hegemony, we can realise a more or less peaceful transformation to Socialism and will not need another revolution. It is more possible, however, that one part of the Right bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie will fight against us. The landlords would already have been liquidated by the Republic.

"In the transformation to the Socialist revolution, a small part of the bourgeoisie in power under the democratic republic, together with other elements, will struggle, and a new civil war will possibly begin. But this will be easy to liquidate. We would then have the leadership in the government of the Republic and could simply envelope them.....At present we have the hegemony only of the peasants and the Red Army. During the anti-Japanese War we must win over all of the masses and troops and the whole leftist movement, either outside or inside the Kuomintang, and educate them. Not only must we drive away the imperialists, but the agrarian problem must be solved. Then a new type of republic will be established, which will liquidate all feudalism, carry out agrarian revolution, confiscate Japanese property in China, and control the large industries, railways and communications, and may establish control over the imperialist interests of the foreign powers in China. The peasants and workers will thereby be prepared for the future and educated to be conscious of socialism

as an aim. Only after the democratic tasks are realised, when national independence and the agrarian revolution are realised, and the hegemony is with the masses—only then will the transformation to Socialism be realised. I repeat, only after the agrarian and anti-imperialist struggle is won will the transformation to socialism occur. And first we must drive away the Japanese, then let the revolution develop spontaneously as the situation makes necessary..... We must utilise all democratic elements, the petty-bourgeoisie and even part of the national bourgeoisie in realising the revolution. If we Communists should start a socialist revolution now, this would mean that we would have to fight against these elements, especially against the capitalists, Chiang Kai-shek and the national bourgeoisie. Such a conflict would endanger the anti-Japanese struggle. Therefore our line is to unite with the peasants and the city petty-bourgeoisie, and, if the bourgeoisie will participate in the anti-imperialist struggle, we should also like to unite with them. The first thing to be done is to utilise all elements to overthrow Japan. Afterwards, we can talk of different tasks. Unless we go slow with the democratic steps of the revolution, we may liquidate the revolution itself, because we would have no friends, no reserve allies to support us. It is utopian to rush into a socialist movement, and such a step is therefore against the proletarian revolution.....

"We estimate that at present the class lines of the bourgeoisie, the proletariat and the peasantry, all coincide on the anti-Japanese problem. In capitalist countries the United Front is against fascism and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. This means that the proletariat unites with the petty-bourgeoisie and all democratic elements to fight against fascism. Lenin said that to fight against the main enemy, we must win the petty-bourgeois elements. The other kind of United Front is in colonial countries. To fight the imperialists, the proletariat can unite with the bourgeoisie at a certain stage if it will really fight against imperialism and not obstruct the freedom of education for the masses. Our national programme is in accordance with Lenin's theory of the national question. In one stage, the bourgeoisie is more afraid of the Japanese than of the revolution." \*

Comrade Wai further explains the concrete tactics for realising democracy in China, and frankly states the demands of the Communist Party on the Kuomintang.



"Our general slogan is for the establishment of a democratic republic. We struggle for this in two ways :

"First, we demand democratic rights and civil liberties, so that the masses can be mobilised. We want the Government to abolish the Emergency Laws of 1931, and to reinstitute the original Provisional Laws. We demand the abolition of the censorship of the press, and freedom of expression not harmful to the democratic revolution. But we do not want freedom for the pro-Japanese traitors. We want an 'anti-Japanese Democracy', just as Spain had an 'anti-Fascist Democracy.'..... We have made the demand to the Kuomintang that every kind of pro-Japanese organisation be dissolved at once and their freedom taken away. All political prisoners must be released except pro-Japanese traitors. The peasants and workers must have the right to organise unions, and all parties and groups which are not pro-Japanese must have freedom to work legally. There must be freedom of academic thought in schools, and freedom for those with political beliefs other than the San Min Chu I. In short, we demand that all kinds of measures for suppression be stopped, except those against the pro-Japanese elements...

"Second, we demand an improvement in the present government structure. We ask that all except the pro-Japanese groups shall have representation in the government, and certain government organs be formed to get rid of corrupt elements. The Government must realise universal suffrage and call a parliamentary assembly which will elect a democratic Central Government. In every province there must be a provincial assembly elected by the people, and militarist leaders must be prohibited from intervening in civil affairs, and obey the civil power of the Government. Every party must have the right to name candidates for direct elections..... The aim of the above is to realise a democratic parliament and government, and to achieve universal adult suffrage, with no limitations of property, race, level of culture, religion or sex. This is the kind of democracy we are now instituting in the Soviet districts.

"These two steps can gradually bring about a Democratic Republic during the process of struggle. We do not worry so much about laws, as depend upon mass pressure.

"If China wins the war, the country will belong to the Communists', is the fear sometimes voiced. To allay this suspicion

the Central Committee of the Communist Party issued a manifesto as early as December 1937, offering to continue the United Front with the Kuomintang not only during the war but 'in building the new China after victory has been achieved.' This was eloquently amplified in their official organ some months later, 19th July 1938, by the statement that 'if the Kuomintang and the Communist parties drive the invader out by joint effort, then the Kuomintang will have proved by action that it is the largest party which fought for the national existence of China. Its leader Chiang Kai-shek and other leaders who determinedly led in the anti-Japanese war will then be immortal heroes of China.' Who then could proceed with a struggle to overthrow the Kuomintang?...The Chinese Communist Party will also...enjoy support and respect from the people, and nobody will be able to violate the people's will and overthrow the Communist Party. Both the Kuomintang and Communist parties will develop further the spirit engendered in the period of co-operation during the difficult times of the war." \*

There are those who quake at the thought of a decisive swing towards democracy by a newly-awakened China, because it would inevitably spell success for the Communist programme, because it would set in motion forces of freedom and emancipation which would be too stormy and tumultuous to be controlled by feudal or reactionary capitalist elements.

But the real danger today to China does not arise from the Communists and their programmes. The lethargy of ages is being shaken off by the Chinese masses, by the masses all over Asia. The danger arises from those who wish to stem the incoming tide of advancement and progress, from those who wish to move too slowly, too haltingly, if at all.

Asia is changing. No power on earth can dam the rushing torrent. China is in the vanguard of this movement. The Communist programme records the momentum of progress and asks for responsive changes in the structure of the government and in military strategy. The reactionary elements fail to see that even an alliance with Japan cannot smother the movement. The only alternative is: will China move forward unitedly, in an orderly fashion, or will China have to face a short, yet swift, civil war, before the surging tide of Chinese nationhood swallows up the obstacles, the reactionary, pro-fascist elements? That such a civil war can never ultimately

prevent a triumph of the Communists there is no doubt whatsoever.

Owen Lattimore has said: "If we are to have chaos in China, it will be of our own making. Apart from the fact that this chaos would spread all over Asia, civil war in China would mean in the end, the triumph of the Chinese Communists. This would be a magnificent irony, seeing that unless they are forced into a civil war, the Chinese Communists are bound to remain a minority. If, on the other hand, a civil war were forced on them, while they themselves continued to demand a clear United Front and victory over Japan, most patriots would rally round them, including many moderates, who would in no other circumstances follow Communist leadership. And beyond question they would have the loyalty of the peasants, in the cause of resistance and real national freedom." \*

Mao once humorously suggested that people so much keener to suppress the internal political opposition than to fight Japan, should adopt a formal resolution, one article of which should be worded as follows :

"Resolved, that in view of the fact that there are too few Communist Party members, and it is necessary to develop their members to the maximum extent; that in view of the fact that there are too few rifles and arms in the hands of the Eighth Route Army, and it is necessary to increase their rifles and arms to the maximum extent; therefore, we, the reactionary elements, take upon ourselves the obligation of launching a punitive campaign against the Communists." \*\*

In the meantime, the Chinese Communists are marching on, from strength to strength, in spite of all obstacles, upholding the United Front with the Kuomintang, an example for all Asia to follow.

THE END





## REFERENCES TO QUOTATIONS.

### PART I

#### Page

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